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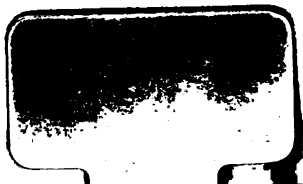


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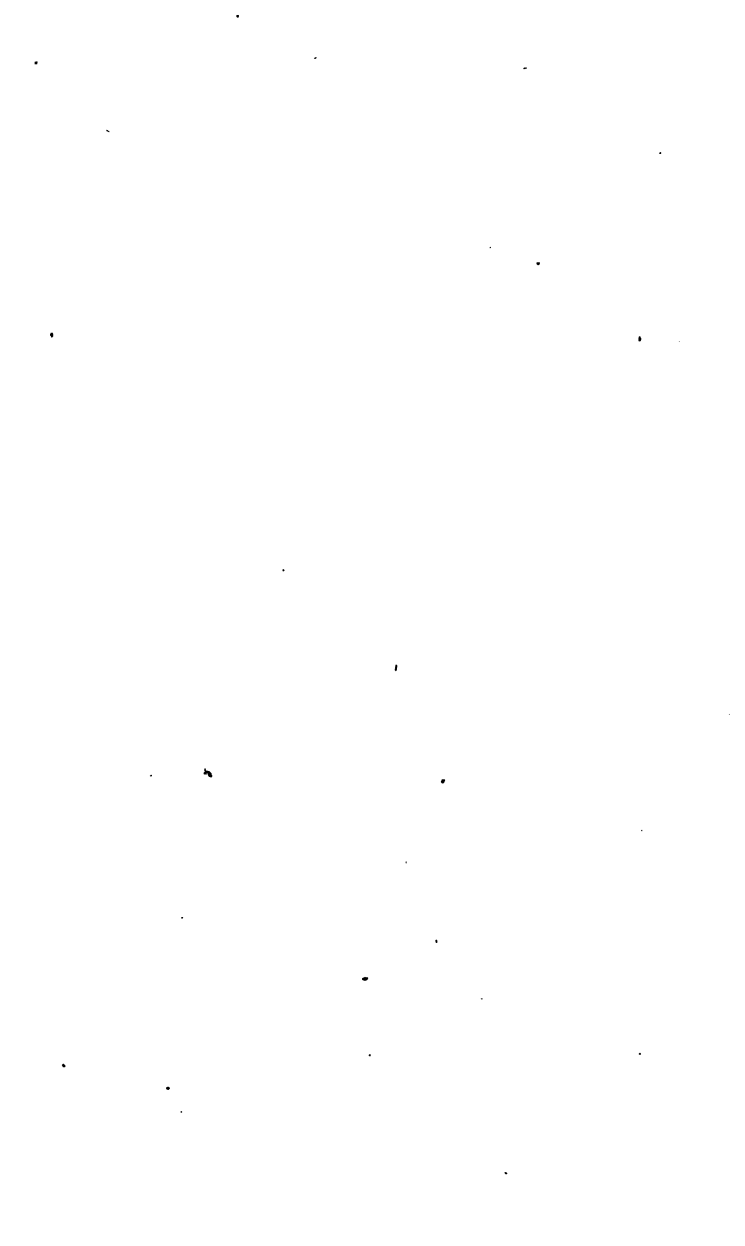
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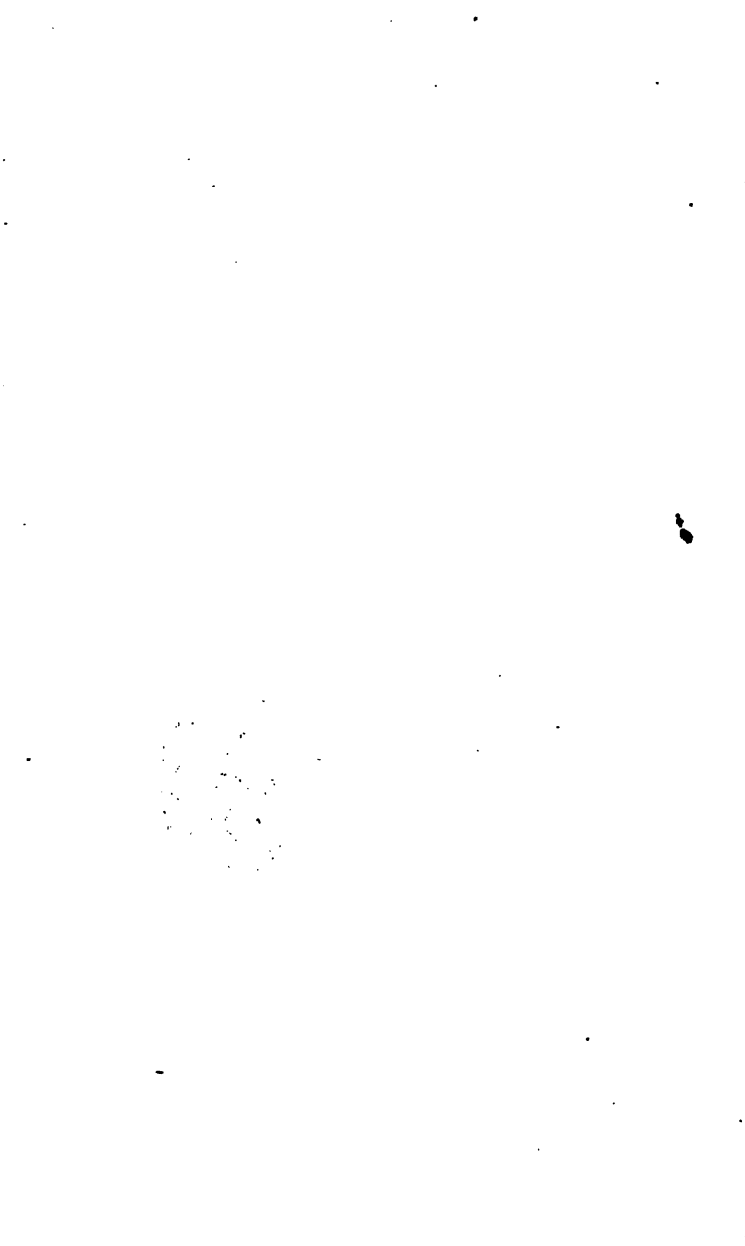


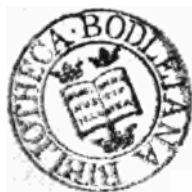














From a Sketch by Sir W. C. Hoare, Bart.

CRUDEN YR ELLYLL.  
p. 20.

Published Decr 1844 by J. Murray, London.

*1. 4. 1828. ✓*  
**FAIRY LEGENDS**

**AND**

**TRADITIONS**

**OF THE**

**SOUTH OF IRELAND.**

**PART III.**



**LONDON.**

**JOHN MURRAY.**

**MDCCCXXVIII.**

*8<sup>o</sup> Sur. A. 11. 140.*



**LONDON:**

**PRINTED BY THOMAS DAVISON, WHITEFRIARS.**

TO

DR. WILHELM GRIMM,

*Secretary of the Prince's Library, Member of the  
Royal Scientific Society of Gottingen,  
&c. &c. &c.*

AT CASSEL, IN HESSEN.

MY DEAR SIR,

I HAVE the pleasure of presenting to you and your brother the third and concluding volume of a work illustrative of the traditionary superstitions of my country.

You will perceive that a considerable portion consists in a close translation of your introductory essay to the *Irische Elfenmärchen*; and I only hope that its appearance in an English dress may be as satisfactory to you, as your translation of the legends to which it is prefixed has been to the writers. But this, critically speaking, I fear, as many words, particularly the old German, presented



difficulties similar to those which you experienced in the Irish name *Boliaun*, even with its English explanatory, Ragweed\*. However, I trust the general meaning has been conveyed.

I have given your essay without note or comment of my own, because I perfectly coincide in the candid opinion which you so kindly expressed to me in your last valuable letter, that an essay on Fairy superstition should exhibit a collection of inferences unmixed with tales and traditions. "Although to the generality of readers," as you justly remark, "the book is thereby rendered what is called less entertaining; yet the scientific examination is undisturbed by the dispersion

\* In justice to the care of the Messrs. Grimm, as translators, I give their note on the "Field of Boliauns."

"Hip is here chosen, because barren and unprofitable tracts are often covered with thorns. In the original it is called Boliaun. The word is not in Nennich's *Catholicon*, nor indeed in any other dictionary. Natives of Ireland, whom a friend has questioned on the subject, affirm that Boliaun is a staff or oudgel; but from the context it must mean a plant. It is also explained by the addition *Ragweed*, which is likewise not an English word; but, as a native of Ireland says, signifies a weed which grows like a bush about an ell high, and has yellow flowers of a disagreeable smell."

of those points on which it really falls, and a clear and firm view of the subject is not lost by poetic amplifications." The corrections and additional notes which you have favoured me with are inserted in their proper places, and I have again to thank you for the communication of them.

The collection of Welsh legends which appears in this volume will, I doubt not, prove acceptable to you, as from their similarity with those current in other countries, they afford an additional proof that the Fairy creed must have been a complete and connected system. I have taken some pains to seek after stories of the Elves in England; but I find that the belief has nearly disappeared, and in another century no traces of English Fairies will remain, except those which exist in the works of Shakspeare, Herrick, Drayton, and Bishop Corbet.

In Devonshire, the Pixies or Pucksies are still remembered and described as "little people and merry dancers;" but I can collect no other anecdotes respecting their pranks than the two following.

About seventy years since a clergyman

named Tanner held two benefices between Crediton and Southmolton, adjoining each other. The farmers of both parishes attended the tithe-audit annually at his residence; and in going to the glebe-house the distant parishioners had to pass an extensive moor, intersected by numerous tracks or sheep-walks. Although they reached their destination in safety in the morning, yet on their return they invariably found themselves "Pixy-laid," and were compelled to pass a night of bewildered wandering upon the moor. Such recreation at Christmas was not very agreeable, and it was determined that a deputation from the parishioners should proceed to Exeter, and consult an old woman celebrated for her skill in charming away the tooth-ach. Her instructions against Pixy spells proved effectual. She directed the way-laid travellers, on reaching the verge of the moor, to strip themselves, and sit down on their clothes for five-and-thirty minutes, or more, according to the state of the weather; and so soon as they discovered the cloud which the Pixies had thrown around them to be dissipated, they might then safely proceed. By following

this valuable prescription Mr. Tanner's parishioners invariably reached their homes without further interruption from Pixy spells, or inconvenience from their hospitable pastor's excellent cockagee cider.

The other legend of Devonian Elves resembles the German one alluded to in your *Essay* at page 110 of this volume; and is told of the family of Sukespic or Sokespitch, respecting whom, if you are curious to inquire into their history, I can refer you to Lysons's *Magna Britannia*, vol. 6, part ii. p. 118. This family resided near Topaham; and a barrel of ale in their cellar had for very many years continued to run freely without being exhausted. It was considered as a valuable heir-loom, and was respected accordingly, until a curious maid-servant took out the bung, to ascertain the cause of this extraordinary power. On looking into the cask, she found it full of cobwebs; but the Pixies, it is supposed, were offended, and on turning the cock as usual, no more ale flowed out.

Our Captain Sainthill, of the royal navy, who is now in his eighty-eighth year, informs me that when he was a boy, the common reply

at Topsham to the inquiry how any affair went on, when it was intended to say that it was proceeding prosperously, was, "It is going on like Sokespitch's cann."

Some traces of Fairy superstition still linger also in Hampshire. Gads Hill or God's Hill, near Newport, in the Isle of Wight, is remarkable for a very ancient church built on its summit, and, until lately, the old women, as they toiled up this hill to their devotions, might be heard lamenting "that the Fairies would not let the church bide on the plain, where it was intended to be built."

This church, according to the tradition, was commenced on the plain at the foot of the hill, and considerable progress was made with the building in that situation. One morning, however, when the workmen arrived, they found, to their great astonishment, that the walls had completely disappeared, and at last they discovered them on the summit of the hill, precisely in the same state they had been left in on the plain the preceding evening. As it was not intended to have the church in that elevated situation, the work-

men pulled down the walls, removed the bricks from the hill to the plain, and again commenced the building. But no sooner had the walls gained their former height, than they were again transported to the hill. The workmen, though less surprised than before, persevered in their intention of building on the plain, and having brought down the bricks, began for the third time to erect the church. When the walls were raised to the same height as before, they determined on watching for the persons who had so provokingly removed them to the summit of the hill, and had thus twice frustrated their intention. The weather favoured the workmen, for it was a beautiful moonlight night, and they distinctly saw innumerable little people busily employed in demolishing the walls. Although the bricks seemed considerably larger than these little creatures, yet they appeared to carry them without difficulty, and very soon completed their purpose of having the church upon the hill. Some of the workmen said that they saw them dancing in a ring on the site after having removed the bricks. Ocular proof being thus given of

the impossibility of carrying on the design of building the church on the plain, it was determined to erect it on the hill, where it was speedily completed without interruption. The hill, from the church, received the name of God's Hill, afterwards corrupted into Gads Hill; and when the building was finished, great rejoicing and shouting was heard, which was supposed to proceed from the little people making merry on account of their success.

This legend I received a few months since from a friend: he had obtained it from his nurse, who was then above ninety, and with whose death he has just acquainted me. It will, I am sure, my dear sir, recall a very similar tale in Mr. Thiele's *Danske Folkesagn* to your memory.

On mentioning the subject of Hampshire Fairies to Mr. Landseer, who has not confined his inquiries alone to "*Sabean Researches*," he pointed out to my notice the names of "Puck-pool," and "Puck-aster Cove," in the Isle of Wight. The former, which is about two miles from Ryde, near the eastern skirts of the grounds belonging to Appley, is now a small, sedgy, and neglected

pond, which scarcely more than answers to the line, "The nine men's morrice is filled up with mud;" and beyond its name has nothing to recall Puck to the imagination. Puck-aster is a romantic fishing-cove on the south side of the island. "It may easily be conceived," said Mr. Landseer, "to have formerly been the scene of such fairy frolics as that merry wanderer of the night boasts of as being his pastime. Its hollows, where dank vapours must in past ages have lingered, are now drained; and the plantations of Mr. Arnold, and other gentlemen, who have built cottages there, have rendered it a scene at once smiling and wild. But every poetical spectator will see at a glance that it must in days of yore have been the very place where Robin Goodfellow, 'in very likeness of a friar's lantern,' has laughed at the misled clowns; where those 'faithless phantoms,' the wild-fires of autumn, have often sparkled and sported. The name Puck-aster (or Puck a Star) agrees precisely with these local phenomena."

"When I visited this fairy spot," continues Mr. Landseer, "recollecting how large a



portion of Shakspeare's life there is of which nothing is known, and reflecting how impossible it is to suppose that any portion of his life could have been inactively spent; my fancy was quite ready to fill up part of the hiatus with a supposition that our great bard was at some time during that period rambling with strolling players, and that in the course of those rambles he had visited the Isle of Wight, and gathered there some of his local fairy lore. Some thirty and odd years ago, when I was there, the island was periodically visited by histrionic strollers from 'the continent of England.' (This was an immortal custom). And in the time of Shakspeare, the Isle was so well wooded, that he might have found in it all his fairy scenery (for it may well be classed under sea-shore and forest scenery); and where else do you find the name Puck stamped on the country itself?"

The northern counties of England are, I am inclined to think, those which retain the memory of the Elves most strongly. Yorkshire, in particular, has many secluded districts; and although I have been unable to obtain

any tales, I know that some exist respecting the appearance and freaks of the Barguest and the Bogle. At Thorn, in that county, about fifty years since, it was a common practice of the children to go to a neighbouring hill on a particular day (Shrove Tuesday), in order that they might hear the Fairies frying their pancakes within the rock.

Amid this dearth of English Fairy Legends, I have been surprised at receiving from Mr. Balmanno the following account of the actual appearance of a fairy within three miles of the British metropolis. He gives it on the authority of his late friend, Mr. Fuseli, the artist, "than whom," remarks Mr. Balmanno, "there never lived a greater lover of a fairy tale."

"For nearly half a century, a weekly dinner party of literary men took place at the house of Joseph Johnson, a respectable and honest bookseller in St. Paul's Churchyard. Johnson was the publisher of Captain Steadman's work on Surinam, and as the captain lived at Hammersmith, he usually came to town on the morning of the weekly dinner, by the Hammersmith stage. As the coach was proceed-

ing at its usual rumbling rate towards London, Captain Steadman was aroused by a very uncommon sound in the air, and on looking out of the coach-door, his surprise was increased by the apparition of a little fellow, about two feet high, dressed in a full suit of regimentals, with a gold-laced cocked hat, and a gold-headed cane, striding along the footpath, "and raising such a devil of a sough," that the captain's astonishment knew no bounds. He rubbed his eyes, looked, doubted, and looked again, but there to visible certainty was the little man striding away, swinging his arm, and "swishing his cane," in full force, going at the rate of nine miles an hour, and leaving the coach far behind him. Away he went at this prodigious pace, until he came to a green lane, which led to Holland-house, up which he wisked with the greatest nimbleness. When the coach came opposite to the lane, the little man was nowhere to be seen.

"This was related by Captain Steadman at dinner, the very day it occurred, and he continued to affirm his belief in the appearance of the goblin to the day of his death."

In Buckinghamshire and Wiltshire, where

I have had opportunities of going among the peasantry, and conversing with them, I could extract no other supernatural tales than those respecting witches, and their intercourse with the Evil One; who, according to the traditions of these counties, cannot be so formidable an enemy as he is generally considered, having been more than once vanquished by a drunken blacksmith, whose name varies in different districts, but who was well known, and is perfectly remembered by many credible witnesses in each.

Thus, my dear Sir, I have laid before you the result of nearly three years' constant inquiry after the Elves in England. Scotland has had an abundance of Fairy historians, and with what they have written, it is evident that few are better acquainted than yourself. As, however, establishing the connexion which you have pointed out between witchcraft and Fairy superstition (page 140 of this volume) you will, I think, be pleased with the following communication, for which I am indebted to the kindness of Sir Walter Scott.

"A rummager of our records," writes Sir Walter, "sent me the other day a most sin-

gular trial of an old woman, who was tried, condemned, and burned alive for holding too close a connexion with Elf-land. The poor old woman was in fact tried for having succeeded in curing maladies by her prayers and spells, as well as her herbs and ointments. Her familiar was one Tom Reid, whom she saw almost daily, at the hour of noon. He died, as he told her (for to her he was a posthumous acquaintance), in the fatal battle of Pinkie, called 'the Black Saturday,' and, it seems, was carried off by those wandering spirits, the fairies, who, when heaven and hell were sharing stakes, came in for some portion, it would seem, of so magnificent a spoil as 'the Black Saturday' afforded.

" ' I cannot help, therefore, enclosing you a sketch of Tom Reid, a favourite, as it appears, of the queen of Elf-land. To save you and myself trouble, I use the modern orthography, but retain the Scottish words.

" ' Asked by what art or knowledge she could tell divers persons of things they *lost* (lost), or were stolen away, or help sick persons? Answered and declared, ' that she herself had no kind of art or science so to do,

but divers times, when any such persons came to her, she would inquire at ane Thomey Reid, who died at Pinkie (as he himself affirmed), who would tell her what she asked.' Item, she being inquired (at) what kind of man this Thomey Reid was? Declared, 'he was an honest, seemly, elderly man, gray-bearded, and had ane gray coat, with Lombart sleeves of the old fashion, ane pair of gray breeks, and white *schankis* (leggings or stockings), gartered above the knee, and ane black bonnet on his head, close behind and plain before, with silken laces drawn through the *lips* (brims) thereof, and ane white wand in his hand.'

" 'Item, being interrogated, how and in what manner and place the said Thomey Reid came to her? Answered, 'as she was ganging betwixt her *ain* (own) house and the yard of Monkcastle, driving her kye to the pasture, and making heavy *sair dole* (sore lamentation) with herself, *greeting* (weeping loudly) very fast for her cow that was dead, her husband and child that were lying sick on the land, ill, and she new arisen out of *gisance* (from *gisants*, French, an in-lying woman), the foresaid

Thomey met her by the way, *halsed*\* her (saluted her courteously), and said, 'Good day, Bessie,' and she said, 'Good day, good man.' 'Santa Maria!' said he, 'Bessie, why makes thou so great dole and great wisting for any worldly thing?' She answered, 'Alas! have I not cause to make great dole? for our gear is *trakit* (our cattle destroyed by sickness), and my husband is on the point of death, and ane baby of my own will not live, and myself at a weak point: have I not cause, then, to have so sore a heart?' But Thomey said, 'Bessie, thou has craved God, and asked something you should not have done; and therefore I consell thee to wend to home, for I tell thee thy *bairn* (child) shall die ere you come home, thy two sheep shall die too, but thy husband shall mend, and be haill and feir as ever he was.' (Then Thomey Reid went away from me, in through the yard of Monkcastle, and I thought he *gaed* (went) in at a narrow hole of the dike, smaller than earthly man could have gone through, and so I was something *fleyit* (affrightened).'

\* *Halse* is neck in Scotch as in German, &c.

1911<sup>1</sup> Notwithstanding his religious commencement, Thomey became afterwards unreasonable in his demands, insisting, that Bessie should deny her Christendom, and yield up the faith she took, at the font-stone; but on this point she was, by her own account, resolute. Nevertheless Thomey appeared afterwards in her dwelling, her husband and three tailors being present, although neither integer nor fractional part of a man were aware of his elvish presence. He took her out of doors with him to the kiln-end, where there were twelve persons, eight women and four men; 'The men were clad in gentlemen's clothing, and the women had all plaids round about them, and were very seemly like to see, and Thomey was with them.' 'Demanded, if she knew any of them?' Answered, 'none, except Thomey.' Demanded, what they said to her? Answered; 'they bade her sit down, and said, 'welcome Bessie, wilt thou go with us?' But she answered not, because Thomey had forbidden her;' with much more to the same purpose; especially how she excused Thomey of the most distant approach to impropriety, except that in pressing her to go to





springing from a common root, used to express a fairy or goblin, and even a hag or witch. Thus we have the compound *Leannan-sighe*, a familiar, from *Leannan*, a pet, and *Sioghdh-raoidheachd*, enchantment with or by spirits.

*Sigh-gàoiithe*, or *siaheann-gàoiithe*, a whirlwind is so termed, because it is said to be raised by the fairies. The close of day is called *Sia*, because twilight,

“ That sweet hour, when day is almost closing,”

is the time when the fairies are most frequently seen. Again, *Sigh* is a hill or hillock, because the fairies are believed to dwell within. *Sidhe*, *sidheadh*, and *sigh*, are names for a blast or blight, because it is supposed to proceed from the fairies. I could readily produce other instances, to show nearly as extended an use of the word *Si*, or *she* (it is so pronounced) as that of *alp*, which is so well illustrated in your Essay. In that curious poem, “The Irish Hudibras,” 1689, the word *Shoges* is used. This is probably *Sigh oges*, young spirits; *oge* corresponding to our word junior.

“ Within a wood near to this place  
There grows a bunch of three-leaved grass,

Called by the Boglanders\* shamroques (*shámrocka*)  
 A present for the queen of *Shoges*†,  
 Which thou must first be after fetching,  
 But all the cunning 's in the catching," &c. p. 23.

In another place the nun says,

" Yet for the grace I have with Joaney,  
 Queen of *Shoges*, and my own croney,  
 I know as much Nees as another,  
 But dare not tell it, were it my brother." p. 81.

It is related in O'Flaherty's *Ogygia*, part iii, and other works, that St. Patrick, who, with some of his followers, were engaged in chanting matins at a fountain one morning very early, were taken for *sidhe* or fairies by the daughters of King Laogar, whither the fair pagans repaired "to wash their faces, and view themselves in that fountain as in a mirror." The passage is curious, and I will quote it, as I do not think you have seen it.

" When the princesses saw these venerable gentlemen, clothed in white surplices, and holding books in their hands, astonished at their unusual dress and attitudes, they looked upon them to be the people *Sidhe*. The Irish

\* Clowns.

† Spirits.

call these *Sidhe*, *aërial spirits* or *phantoms*, because they are seen to come out of pleasant hills, where the common people imagine they reside, which fictitious habitations are called by us *Sidhe* or *siodha*. St. Patrick, taking an opportunity of addressing the young ladies, introduced some divine topic, which was concerning the existence of one God only. When the elder of the sisters, in reply, thus unembarrassed, inquired, ‘Who is your God, and where doth he dwell? Does he live in heaven; or under, or on earth? or is his habitation in mountains, or in valleys, or in the sea, or in rivers? Whether has he sons remarkable for their beauty? and are his daughters handsome and more beautiful than the daughters of this world? Are many employed about the education of his son? Is he opulent, and in affluent circumstances, and does his kingdom abound with a plenty of wealth and riches? In what mode of worship does he delight? Whether is he decked in the bloom of youth; or is he bending under the weight of years? Has he a life limited to a certain period, or immortal?’ In which interrogations there was not a word of resemblance or comparison

between the pagan gods, Saturn, Jupiter, Apollo, Venus, Diana, Pallas, Juno, and the unknown divinity; nor did she allude, in her discourse, to that Cromcrnach, the principal god of our heathen deities, or to any of their attributes.

“ From whence we may infer, that the divinities of the Irish were local ones; that is, residing in mountains, plains, rivers, in the sea, and such places. For, as the pagan system of theology taught, ‘ as souls were divided with mortals at their birth, so fatal genii presided over them, and that the Eternal Cause has distributed various guardians \* through all nations.’ And that these topical genii never went to other countries.”—Translated by the Rev. James Hely, A. B. vol. ii. p. 55. Dublin, 1793.

I regret that the space to which I am limited prevents my giving you a curious Irish poem, of thirty verses, which Mr. Edward O'Reilly, the Secretary of the Ibero Celtic Society, most politely forwarded to me. It is an address to a fairy chief by a wandering bard,

\* Symmachus Ethnicus, b. i. Epist. 4.

named Andrew M'Curtin, wherein, by praising the splendour and hospitality of the fairy court, he contrives obliquely to censure the parsimony of the county gentry. This ideal chief is termed Donn of Dooagh, literally Lord of the Vatts, or sand pits; which are certain hollows on the coast of the county Clare. However, as the commencement of this poem exhibits an interesting summary of Irish mythology, I cannot resist presenting you with two or three verses in my translation, as unmusical and as rugged to the full as the original :

Donn of the ocean vatts, I give low reverence to thee;  
'Tis not with haughty Saxon nod, though such is given to me :  
A minstrel blind, of humble mind, seeks pity in thy breast,  
With bow profound, unto the ground, and craves to be thy  
guest.

Oh princely Donn of noble blood—for noble is thy race,  
Thy pedigree is known to me, thy actions can I trace ;  
Of Ain and Eva art thou not, the sky-descended brother,  
For he of might, king Daha hight, did he not wed thy mother ?

Grandson to Lir, who ploughed the field of ocean round old  
Erin,  
Cousin to Donn of dark Knock Uaish, and Donn of high  
Knock Firinn,  
Nursed in sunshine, no pains were thine, bred up in royal court,  
Whence thou didst join, by gentle Boyne, young Angus in his  
sport.

From thence away, with mild Luay—but him thou left for  
 dangers,  
 And rush'd to war with fierce Balar, and necromantic strangers.  
 Milesian barks contended then with more than stormy ocean  
 Against the blast of magic cast, in wild and strange commotion.

Thence far remote, with Naoise of note, thou dwelt in lonely  
 places ;  
 Yet doth thy field, Murthené, yield of mighty deeds some  
 traces.

\* \* \* \* \*

Chief of the battle field, to thee Conn owes his hundred fights ;  
 For thou to Spain led o'er the main Egan, who fled his rights :  
 To Finn thou gave thy powerful aid on Traha's shore of  
 slaughter,

Where the battle cry pealed to the sky, and blood poured free  
 as water.

\* \* \* \* \*

\* \* \* \* \*

Since that day's strife thou led a life of feasting and of sleeping ;  
 And where's the need, for me indeed, to tell of thy housekeeping ?  
 Fair chief, whose beauty far exceeds the blossom of that flower,  
 Lord of the gray and mossy rock, smooth hill and pleasant  
 bower, &c.

On Knock Uaish and Knock Firinn, I must  
 append Mr. O'Reilly's note, as it establishes

a conjecture offered in the first volume of this work : “ The first of these mountains is situated in the county of Cork, and is now called Knock na Noss; the other is in the county of Limerick. Of the fairy chiefs of each of these hills, and of their respective hosts, many extraordinary stories are told by the old people of the adjoining districts. Knock Firinn is called by the people of the country ‘ *Knock Dhoinn Firinne*,’ the mountain of Don of Truth. This mountain is very high, and may be seen for several miles round; and when people are desirous to know whether or not any day will rain, they look at the top of Knock Firinn, and if they see a vapour or mist there, they immediately conclude that rain will soon follow; believing that Donn of that mountain and his aerial assistants are collecting the clouds, and that he holds them there for some short time, to warn the people of the approaching rain. As the appearance of mist on that mountain in the morning is considered an infallible sign that that day will be rainy, Donn is called ‘ *Donn Firinne*,’ Donn of Truth.”

I have now only, my dear Sir, to return you my best and warmest acknowledgments for



the flattering manner in which you and your brother have accepted the dedication of this volume, and to assure you that

I remain

your grateful and

very faithful servant,

*T. Crofton Croker.*

*London,  
12th November, 1827.*

---

*The Etchings and Wood Engravings designed and executed  
by W. H. Brooke, F. S. A.*

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THE  
ELVES IN IRELAND.

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1. THE GOOD PEOPLE\*.

THE Elves, which in their true shape are but a few inches high, have an airy, almost transparent body ; so delicate is their form, that a dew-drop, when they dance on it, trembles indeed, but never breaks. Both sexes are of extraordinary beauty, and mortal beings cannot be compared with them.

They do not live alone, or in pairs, but always in large societies. They are invisible to man, particularly in the day-time ; and as they can be present and hear what is said, the peasantry never

\* The Irish expression for Elf in this signification is *Shefro* ; and this in the original is the name of the first division ; but it does not occur elsewhere, nor is there any explanation of it. *She* or *Shi*, without doubt, means Elf ; compare *Ban-shi* and the Scotch *Doane-shi* and *Shian*.

speak of them but with caution and respect, terming them the good people, or the friends ; as any other name would offend them. If a great cloud of dust rises on the road, it is a sign that they are about to change their residence and remove to another place, and the invisible travellers are always saluted with a respectful bow. They have their dwellings in clefts of rocks, caves, and ancient tumuli. Every part within is decorated in the most splendid and magnificent manner ; and the pleasing music which sometimes issues from thence in the night has delighted those who have been so fortunate as to hear it.

During the summer nights, when the moon shines, and particularly in harvest-time, the Elves come out of their secret dwellings, and assemble for the dance in certain favourite spots, which are hidden and secluded places, such as mountain-valleys—meadows near streams and brooks—churchyards where men seldom come. They often celebrate their feasts under large mushrooms, or repose beneath their shade.

In the first rays of the morning sun they again vanish, with a noise resembling that of a swarm of bees or flies.

Their garments are as white as snow, sometimes shining like silver ; a hat or cap is indispensable, for which purpose they generally select

the red flowers of the foxglove, and by it different parties are distinguished.

The secret and magic powers of the Elves are so great as scarcely to know any bounds. They can assume in a moment, not only the human, but every other form, even the most terrific ; and it is easy for them to convey themselves in one second a distance of five leagues.

Before their breath all human energy fails. They sometimes communicate supernatural knowledge to men ; and if a person is seen walking up and down alone, and moving his lips as one half distraught, it is a sign that an Elf is invisibly present and instructing him.

The Elves are above all things fond of music. Those who have heard their music cannot find words to describe the power with which it fills and enraptures the soul : it rushes upon them like a stream ; and yet the tones are simple, even monotonous, and in general resembling natural sounds.

Among their amusements is that of playing at ball, which they pursue with much eagerness, and at which they often differ so as even to quarrel.

Their skill in dancing far exceeds the highest art of man, and the pleasure they take in this amusement is inexhaustible. They dance without interruption till the rays of the sun appear on the



mountains, and make the boldest leaps without the least exertion.

They do not appear to require any food, but refresh themselves with dew-drops which they collect from the leaves.

They severely punish all who inquisitively approach or tease them; otherwise they are friendly and obliging to well-meaning people who confide in them. They remove humps from the shoulder; make presents of new articles of clothing; undertake to grant requests; though in such cases, good-humour on the applicant's part seems to be necessary. Sometimes too they appear in human form, or allow persons who have accidentally strayed among them during the night to join in their dances; but there is always some danger in this intercourse. The person becomes ill in consequence, and falls into a violent fever from the unnatural exertion, as they seem to lend him a part of their power. If he forgets himself, and, according to the custom, kisses his partner, the whole scene vanishes the instant his lips touch hers.

The Elves have another peculiar and more intimate connexion with mortals. It seems as if they divided among themselves the souls of men, and considered them thenceforth as their property. Hence certain families have their particular Elves;

to whom they are devoted, in return for which, however, they receive from them help and assistance in critical moments, and often recovery from mortal diseases. But as after death they become the property of their Elves, the death of a man is to them always a festival at which one of their own body enters into their society. Therefore they require that people shall be present at funerals, and pay them reverence; they celebrate an interment like a wedding, by dancing on the grave, and it is for this reason that they select churchyards for their favourite places of resort. A violent quarrel often arises whether a child belongs to the Elves of the father or of the mother, and in what churchyard it is to be buried. The different parties of these supernatural beings hate and make war on each other, with as much animosity as nations among mankind; their combats take place in the night, in cross-roads, and they often do not separate till daybreak parts them. This connexion of men with a quiet and good tribe of spirits, far from being frightful, would rather be beneficial: but the Elves appear in a dubious character; both evil and good are combined in their nature, and they show a dark as well as a fair side. They are angels expelled from heaven, who have not fallen into hell, but are in fear and doubt respecting their future state, and whether they shall find

mercy at the day of judgment. This mixture of the dark and malevolent is visibly manifested in their actions and inclinations. If in remembrance of their original happy condition they are beneficent and friendly towards man, the evil principle within them prompts them to malicious and injurious tricks. Their beauty, the wondrous splendour of their dwellings, their sprightliness, is nothing more than illusive show; and their true figure, which is frightfully ugly, inspires terror. If, as is but rarely the case, they are seen in the day-time, their countenances appear to be wrinkled with age, or, as people express it, "like a withered cauliflower;" a little nose, red eyes, and hair heavy with extreme age.

One of their evil propensities consists in stealing healthy and fine children from their mothers, and substituting in their room a changeling who bears some resemblance to the stolen infant, but is in fact only an ugly and sickly Elf. He manifests every evil disposition, is malicious, mischievous, and, though insatiable as to food, does not thrive. When the name of God is mentioned, he begins to laugh, otherwise he never speaks, till being obliged to do so by artifice, his age is betrayed by his voice, which is that of a very old man. The love of music shows itself in him, as well as extraordinary proficiency; supernatural energies are also mani-

tested in the power with which he obliges every thing, even inanimate objects, to dance. Wherever he comes he brings ruin: a series of misfortunes succeed each other, the cattle become sick, the house falls into decay, and every enterprise proves abortive. If he is recognised and threatened he makes himself invisible, and escapes; he dislikes running water, and if he is carried on a bridge, he jumps over, and sitting upon the waves plays on his pipe, and returns to his own people. He is called in Irish *Lepreehan*\*.

At particular times, such as May eve, for instance, the evil Elves seem to be peculiarly active and powerful; to those to whom they are inimical, they give a blow unperceived, the consequence of which is lameness; or they breathe upon them, and boils and swellings immediately appear on the place which the breath has touched. Persons who pretend to be in particular favour with the fairies, undertake to cure such diseases by magic and mysterious journeys.

## 2. THE CLURICAÚNE.

In this quality the Elf is essentially distinguished from the Shefro by his solitary and awk-

\* The word, properly written *Prèachán* or *Priachan*, is said to signify a raven.

ward manners; the Cluricaune is never met with in company, but always alone. He is much more corporeal, and appears in the day-time as a little old man with a wrinkled countenance, in an antiquated dress. His pea-green coat is adorned with large buttons, and he seems to take a particular delight in having large metal shoe-buckles. He wears a cocked hat in the ancient French style. He is detested on account of his evil disposition; and his name is used as an expression of contempt. People try to become his master, and therefore often threaten him; sometimes they succeed in outwitting him, sometimes he is more cunning, and cheats them. He employs himself in making shoes, at the same time whistling a tune. If he is surprised by man when thus engaged, he is indeed afraid of his superior strength, but endowed with the power of vanishing, if he can contrive to make the mortal turn his eyes from him even for an instant.

The Cluricaune possesses a knowledge of hidden treasures, but does not discover them till he is pressed to the utmost. He frequently relieves himself when a man fancies that he is wholly in his power. A common trick of his is infinitely to multiply the mark showing where the treasure lies, whether it be a bush, a thistle, or a branch, that it may no longer serve as a guide to the person who

has fetched an instrument to dig up the ground. The Cluricaune has a small leathern purse with a shilling, which, however often he may pay it away, always returns, and which is called the lucky shilling (*sprè na skillenagh*). He frequently carries about him two purses; the one contains the magic shilling, and the other a copper coin; and if compelled to deliver, he cunningly presents the latter, the weight of which is satisfactory, and when the person who has seized it is examining whether it is correct, he watches the opportunity, and disappears.

His enjoyments consist in smoking and drinking. He knows the secret, which the Danes are said to have brought into Ireland, of making beer from heather. The small tobacco-pipes of antique form, which are frequently found in Ireland in digging or ploughing, especially in the vicinity of those circular entrenchments, called Danish forts, are supposed to belong to the Cluricaunes; and if they are discovered broken, or in any way damaged, it is looked upon as a sort of atonement for the tricks which their pretended owners are presumed to have played\*.

\* There is a representation of such a pipe in the *Anthologia Hibernica* (Dublin, 1793), i. 352, and in the original of these tales, p. 176.

The Cluricaune also appears connected with men, and then attaches himself to a family, with which he remains as long as a member of it survives, who are at the same time unable to get rid of him. With all his propensity to mischief and roguery, he usually has a degree of respect for the master of the house, and treats him with deference. He lends a helping hand, and wards off secret dangers; but is extremely angry and enraged if they forget him, and neglect to put his food in the usual place.

### 3. THE BANSHEE.

This word is variously interpreted as the chief of the Elves, and the white woman. It means a female spirit belonging to certain families, generally, however, of ancient or noble descent, which appears only to announce the death of one of the members. The Banshee shows herself in the vicinity of the house, or at the window of the sick person, clasps her hands, and laments in tones of the greatest anguish. She wears an ample mantle, with a hood over her head.

## 4. THE PHOOKA.

It is difficult to obtain any correct notions of this spirit\*. There is something indefinite and obscure about it. People recollect it imperfectly, like a dream, even though they have experienced the strongest sensations; yet the Phooka is palpable to the touch. It appears as a black horse,—an eagle,—a bat, and compels the man of whom it has got possession, and who is incapable of making any resistance, to go through various adventures in a short time. It hurries with him over precipices, carries him up into the moon, and down to the bottom of the sea. If a building falls in, it is imputed to the Phooka. There are numerous precipices and rocky caverns, called Phooka caves (Poula Phooka); even a waterfall formed by the Liffey, in the county of Wicklow, has derived its name from this spirit. The people prohibit their children from eating blackberries after Michaelmas, and ascribe the decay of that fruit, which takes place after that season, to the Phooka.

\* The collector observes, p. 275, that the Welsh word *Gwyll*, which signifies darkness, night, shade, mountain-spirit, fully corresponds with the Irish Phooka. It is the Alp of the Germans.



5. THE LAND OF YOUTH.—(*Thierna na oge*).

Beneath the water is a country, as well as above the earth, where the sun shines, meadows flourish, trees blossom, fields and woods alternate, cities and palaces arise, only far more magnificent and splendid, and inhabited by happy fairies. If you have found, at the proper moment, the right spot upon the banks of the water, you may behold all these wonders. Persons who have fallen in, and reached this subaqueous world without accident, have given an account of it on their return. It is called the Land of Youth, because time has no power there, no one becomes old, and persons who have passed many years there, fancied it only to be a moment. On particular days, at the rising of the sun, these fairies appear above the surface of the water with the greatest splendour, decked in all the colours of the rainbow. With music, and dancing, and rejoicing, they pass in a certain track along the water, which no more yields under their feet than the solid earth under the foot of man, till they at length vanish in mist.



THE  
ELVES IN SCOTLAND.

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THE basis of the following dissertation is, "The Popular Superstitions and festive Amusements of the Highlanders of Scotland, Edinburgh, 1823, by W. Grant Stewart;" a book hitherto unknown in Germany, and with which the compiler of the Irish Legends appears to have been unacquainted; yet it is very valuable for the variety and minuteness of the oral traditions preserved in it. We have also availed ourselves of the Essay on Fairies, in the second volume of Walter Scott's *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border*, 4th Edit. Edinb. 1810. II. p. 109—183, and the Introduction, I. 99—103, of his notes to the *Lady of the Lake*; Graham's *Sketches of Picturesque Scenery on the Southern Confines of Perthshire*, p. 107—118; Jamieson in the *Illustrations of Northern Antiquities*, I. 404—406; Allan Cunningham's *Traditional Tales*, Lond. 1822. II. 89—122; all which, however, in comparison with the first mentioned work, are not considerable.

1. *Descent.* The Elves are called Doane Shee : Men of peace, good people. They were originally angels, dwelling in bliss ; but having yielded to the temptations of the devil, were cast out of heaven in countless numbers. They are doomed to wander amid mountains and lakes till the day of judgment, in ignorance of their sentence whether they shall be pardoned or condemned, but they fear the worst.

2. *Form.* No other superhuman being can vie with the fairies in beauty, and they seem still to retain traces of their original state. They are in general diminutive in stature, but of the most perfect symmetry. The female fairies in particular are said to be the most enchanting creatures in the world. Their eyes sparkle like diamonds, red and white are delicately blended in their cheeks, their lips resemble coral, and their teeth ivory, and a profusion of dark-brown hair falls in ringlets over their shoulders. Their garments are of a green hue and very simple. They are angry when mortals wear this colour, who for this reason consider it to be an unlucky one. In the Highlands it is generally a woollen stuff; in marshes they have sometimes been seen clothed in heath-brown, or in dresses dyed with the lichen.

3. *Dwellings and mode of life.* The Elves are a sociable tribe, passionately fond of pleasure and

amusements. They rarely live together in pairs, but wander about in companies; and each has a distinct dwelling or place of abode, where they all assemble according to circumstances, and which is called *Tomhan*, or *Shian*. These dwellings are generally in the caves and precipices of wild and lonesome places; they are built of stone, in the form of irregular towers, and so strong and durable as to resemble pieces of rock, or mounds of earth. The doors, windows, and chimneys are so skilfully concealed, that the naked eye cannot see them in the day-time, but in the night they are discovered by the bright light which issues from them. In Perthshire they inhabit round and verdant hills, on which they dance by the light of the moon. Not far from Lochcon is a place called Coirshian, to which they are particularly attached; near it are conical elevations, especially one above Lake Katrine, which many persons are afraid to pass after sun-set. People sometimes discover traces of them in circles, which are sometimes yellow and trodden down, sometimes of a dark green colour: in these it is dangerous to sleep or to be found after sun-set. Joy and mirth reign in such assemblies of the fairies; for they are particularly fond of dancing, and it is one of their chief occupations. The most delightful music accompanies them. But, in spite of all this gaiety, the fairies

are jealous of the more pure and perfect happiness of man ; and there is always a gloom and anxiety in their secret pleasures, as well as something false or merely illusive in the splendour of their Shians. If not absolutely malicious, they are yet peevish and envious beings. The Highlanders do not like to speak of them, especially on a Friday, when their power is said to be particularly great : and as they can be invisibly present, they are never mentioned but with much respect.

Sometimes, too, they ride invisibly in a large body, when the ringing of their bridles betrays their presence. On these occasions they often take the horses out of people's stables, which are found in the morning fatigued and panting, their manes and tails in disorder. Their own horses are generally as white as snow.

4. *Intercourse with men.* The dwellings of the fairies have sometimes been visited by men, who have either been enticed by them or else discovered the entrances at particular seasons. The people in Perthshire believe that a person who walks alone nine times round a fairy hill on Christmas eve will see an open door on his left hand, by which he may enter. A farmer in the neighbourhood of Cairngorm, in Strathspey, emigrated with his family and his cattle to the forest of Glenavon, which is known to be an abode of

fairies. Two of his sons, who had gone out in the night to seek some strayed sheep, came to a *Shian* of great extent ; to their no small surprise they saw the most brilliant light issuing from innumerable clefts in the rock, which the keenest eye had never before discovered in it. Curiosity prompted them to approach, and, enchanted with the magic notes of a violin, accompanied by expressions of the greatest mirth, they were in some measure reconciled to their dangerous situation. One of the brothers, in spite of the dissuasions of the other, could not resist his desire to take part in the dance, and at length jumped, at one leap, into the *Shian*. His brother, who did not venture to follow him, placed himself near one of the clefts, and, as is customary, called him three times by his name, Donald Macgillivray, and earnestly entreated him to return home ; but all in vain : Donald was obliged to bring the melancholy news of his brother's fate to his parents. Every means and art which were resorted to, to withdraw him from the power of the fairies, proved fruitless, and he was given up for lost. At length a wise man advised Donald to return to the *Shian* after the lapse of a year and a day ; that a cross on his dress would protect him from the power of the *Elves*, and he might then go in with confidence, demand back his brother in the name of God ; and

in case he refused to follow him, to carry him away by force. Donald sees the light in the Shian, and hears music and rejoicing: after some anxious hesitation he at length enters and finds his brother, who, with the utmost hilarity, is dancing a highland reel. He hastens up to him, takes him by the collar, and conjures him to accompany him. He consents, but wishes first to finish the dance, saying he had not been there more than half an hour. Donald in vain assures him, that instead of half an hour, he had already been dancing a twelvemonth; nor would he have credited him on his return home had not the growth of the children and of the calves convinced him that his dance had lasted a year and a day.

About three hundred years ago there lived in Strathspey two men who were celebrated for their skill in playing on the violin. It once happened that they went, about Christmas time, to Inverness to exercise their art. They immediately took lodgings, gave notice of their arrival, and offered their services. There soon appeared an old man, with a venerable aspect, gray hair, and wrinkles in his face, but agreeable and courteous in his manners. They accompanied him, and came to the door of a rather singular house; it was night, but they could easily perceive that the house was not in any part of the country with which they

were acquainted. It resembled a Tomhan in Glenmore. The friendly invitation and the sound of the money overcame their scruples, and all their fear vanished at the sight of the splendid assembly into which they were introduced. The most delicious music inspired boundless joy and pleasure; and the ground trembled under the feet of the dancers. Both the men passed the night in the most satisfactory manner, and took their leave, much pleased with the kind reception they had experienced. But how great was their surprise when, on leaving this singular abode, they found that they were coming out of a little hill, and that every thing which only the day before had looked fresh, new, and splendid, was now in ruins and decayed by age, while they, at the same time, remarked strange alterations in the dress and manners of the many spectators who followed them, full of wonder and amazement! After coming to a mutual explanation, they concluded that the two musicians must have been with the inhabitants of Tomnafurich, where the Elves in the neighbourhood used to assemble. An old man, who had been attracted by the crowd, on hearing the story, exclaimed: "You are the two men who lodged with my great grandfather, and who, as was supposed, were enticed away by Thomas Rymer to Tomnafurich. Your friends lamented



you very much, but a hundred years, which have since elapsed, have caused your names to be forgotten." Both the men, astonished at the miracle which God had wrought in them, went, as it was Sunday, into the church; they sat and listened for a while to the ringing of the bells, but when the clergyman approached the altar to read the gospel to his congregation, strange to say, at the first word which he uttered, they both crumbled into dust.

The traditions respecting the manner in which persons may be released from the power of the fairies are various. According to the general opinion, it must be done within a year and a day, and can be performed only on Christmas eve, at the annual festive procession of the Elves. Whoever in the slightest degree partakes of the proffered dainties forfeits, by this act, the society of men, and is for ever united to the fairies. It is supposed that a person who has once been in their power will not be permitted to return to the abodes of men till after seven years. After the course of another seven years he vanishes, and is then rarely seen again among mortals. The accounts given by them respecting their situation are different. According to some, they lead a life of uninterrupted action, and wander about in the moonshine; and according to others, they inhabit a de-

lightful district: but their situation is rendered miserable by the circumstance, that one or more of them must be sacrificed to the devil every seventh year.

The wife of a farmer in Lothian had fallen into the hands of the fairies, and, during the probationary year, sometimes appeared on a Sunday, among her children, combing their hair. On these occasions she was addressed by her husband; she related to him the melancholy circumstance which had separated them, and told him the means by which he might recover her; she exhorted him to summon all his resolution, as her present and future happiness depended on the success of his undertaking. The farmer, who sincerely loved his wife, went on Christmas eve, and impatiently waited on a heath for the procession of the fairies. At the rattling of the bridles, and the wild supernatural voices of the riders, his courage forsook him, and the train passed without his attempting to interrupt it. When the last had ridden by, they all vanished amidst laughter and exclamations of rejoicing, among which he recognised the voice of his wife, lamenting that she was now lost to him for ever.

A woman had been enticed into the abodes of the good people, and was there recognised by a person who had once been a mortal man, but was

now joined to the fairies. This acquaintance, who still retained some feelings of humanity, warned her of the danger, and advised her, as she valued her freedom, to abstain for a certain time from taking any food with the Elves. She followed his counsel, and when the term had expired, she once more found herself on the earth among men. It is farther said, that the food which was offered to her, and which appeared so tempting, now that the spell was broken, she found, on closer inspection, to consist merely of lumps of earth.

The fairies had carried a new-born infant to their Shian, and afterwards fetched its mother, that she might nurse her own child. One day, during this period, the woman observed the Elves busy in throwing various ingredients into the boiling kettle, and when it was ready, they carefully anointed their eyes with the mixture, and saved the remainder for future use. When all were absent, she resolved to touch her own eyes with this precious ointment, but had only time to try the experiment on one, as the Elves returned too soon. Yet, with this single eye, she was enabled to see clearly every thing as it really was in the Shian; not as heretofore, in illusive splendour and beauty, but in its true shape and colour. The glittering chamber proved to be nothing more than a gloomy cave. Soon after, having

discharged her duty, she was suffered to go home, but still retained the power of being able to discern, in its true colours, every thing deceitfully transformed. One day she recognised among a crowd the Elf in whose possession she had left her child, though he was invisible to every other eye. Actuated by maternal affection, she went up to him with hesitation, and inquired after the health of her child. The Elf, greatly surprised at being seen by a mortal creature, asked her how she had been able to discover him. Terrified at his frightful threatenings, she confessed what she had done. He spit into her eye, and she was blinded for life \*.

Captain George Burton communicated the following particulars for Richard Bove's Pandemonium, which was published in 1684: "About fifteen years ago, I was for some time detained by business at Leith, near Edinburgh, and went frequently with my friends to a respectable house,

\* Graham, who communicates this legend from tradition; and which, as Sir W. Scott, p. 122, assures us is as current in the Highlands as in the Lowlands, was not aware that Gervase of Tilbury had related it with some variation in the *Otia Imperialia*. They were only spirits of the water, among whom the woman was detained, and where she anointed her eyes with serpent's fat.

where we drank a glass of wine. The mistress of the house one day told me, that there was living in the town a little fairy-boy, as she called him; and on my expressing a desire to see him, she soon after pointed him out to me, saying, 'There, sir, that is he who is playing with the other boys.' I went up to him, and by kind words, and a piece of money, induced him to accompany me into the house, where, in the presence of several people, I put to him various astrological questions, which he answered with much precision, and in every thing he afterwards said, proved himself to be much beyond his years, being apparently not more than ten or twelve years of age. On his playing with his fingers on the table, I asked him whether he knew how to beat the drum? 'Yes, sir, as well as any one in Scotland; every Thursday night I beat it for a certain people, who meet in that mountain' (alluding to the great one between Edinburgh and Leith). 'What sort of an assembly is that?' said I. 'A large company of men and women, who, besides my drum, have various other kinds of music, and an abundance of meats and wine: sometimes we are carried to France or Holland, and back again, in one night, and enjoy the amusements of the country.' I asked how one could come into the mountain?

'By two great doors,' replied he, 'which open of themselves, though invisible to others; within are five large rooms, and as handsomely furnished as any in Scotland.' I asked him how I could know that what he told me was true? He answered, he would tell me my fortune: I should have two wives, that he saw the form of one of them sitting on my shoulder, and that both were handsome women. As he said these words, a woman living in the neighbourhood came in, and inquired about her fortune. He told her she would have two children before her marriage, at which she was so angry that she would hear no more. The mistress of the house told me, that all the people in Scotland were not able to prevent his visits on the Thursday night. On my holding out to him the prospect of a larger present of money, he promised to meet me in the same house on the following Thursday. He, in fact, made his appearance, and I had agreed with some friends to detain him from his nocturnal visit. He sat among us, and answered various questions, till about eleven o'clock, when he slipped away unperceived, but instantly missing him, I ran towards the door, held him fast, and brought him back. We all watched him, but all at once he was again out at the door. I followed him; in the street he made

a noise as if he had been attacked, and from that time I never saw him any more."

In their intercourse with men, the Elves are sometimes said to manifest evil propensities and inclinations. A long time ago, there lived in the neighbourhood of Cairngorm, in Strathspey, an old woman, a midwife. Late one night, as she was about to retire, somebody knocked very violently at the door. She opened it, and saw a man on horseback, who entreated her to accompany him without delay, as the life of a person was in great danger. He would not even suffer her to change her dress, but obliged her to ride behind him on the horse just as she was. They galloped off, and he returned no other answer to her questions, than that she would be handsomely rewarded. When she grew more anxious, the Elf said, "My good woman, I am going to take you to an Elves' dwelling, where you are to attend on a fairy; but I promise, by every thing that is sacred, that no harm shall happen to you, but that, as soon as your business is finished, you shall be conducted home in safety, and receive a reward as great as you can desire." The Elf was a handsome young man, whose openness and friendly behaviour removed all her fears. The fairy gave birth to a fine little boy, which was the cause of much re-

joining; and the woman obtained her request, that herself and successors should always be fortunate in their business.

5. *Skill.* — The Elves possess great powers, which they know how to turn to the best advantage. They are the most expert workmen in the world; and every fairy unites in his own person the most various trades: he is his own weaver, tailor, and shoemaker.

A weaver was one night waked out of his sleep by a very great noise; on looking out of bed, he saw his room filled with busy Elves, who were using his tools without the least ceremony. They were employed in converting a large sack of the finest wool into cloth. One was combing, another spinning, a third weaving, the fourth pressing it, and the noise of these different operations and the cries of the fairies created the greatest confusion. Before daybreak they had finished a piece of cloth above fifty ells long, and took their departure without even thanking the weaver for the use of his machinery.

An Elf once made a pair of shoes for a shepherd during the time that he was stirring his porridge, and another shaved an acquaintance with a razor not sharper than a hand.

They are unrivalled in the art of building; this is sufficiently proved by their own dwellings,



which are so strong, that they have resisted the wind and weather for several thousand years, and sustained no damage, except in the stoppage of the chimney.

The buildings which they have executed under the direction of the famous architect, Michael Scott, are truly astonishing. In his early days he used to go once every year to Edinburgh, to get employment. He was once going there with two companions ; they were obliged to pass over a high hill, probably one of the Grampians, and fatigued with the ascent, rested on its summit. They were, however, soon startled by the hissing of a large serpent which darted towards them. Michael's two friends took flight ; but he resolved to make a bold stand, and just as it was about to give him the mortal bite, he, at one stroke of his stick, hewed the monster into three pieces. Having overtaken his terrified companions, they pursued their journey, and lodged for the night in the nearest inn. Here they talked over Michael's adventure with the serpent, which the landlady by chance overheard. Her attention seemed to be excited, and when she heard that the serpent was a white one, she promised to give a large reward to any person who would bring her the middle piece. As the distance was not great, one of the three offered to go : he found the middle

piece, and the tail, but the part with the head had disappeared, and had probably taken refuge in the water, in order to come out again entire, as is the manner of serpents which have combated with men. (It is singular enough, that a person who has been bit by a serpent is infallibly cured if he reaches the water before the serpent.) The woman, on receiving the piece of the serpent, which still gave signs of life, uttered a loud cry, appeared in the highest degree pleased, and gave her guests the best that her house afforded. Michael, curious to know what the woman intended to do with the serpent, feigned to be suddenly seized with violent colic, which could only be cured by sitting near the fire, the warmth of which apparently relieved him. The woman did not at all discover the trick, and thinking that a person in so much pain could not have much curiosity to examine her pots, she willingly consented to his sitting the whole evening at the fire. As soon as all the others had retired, she set about her important business, and Michael had an opportunity of observing, through the keyhole, every thing that occurred. He saw her, after many rites and ceremonies, put the serpent, with some mysterious ingredients, into a kettle, which she brought to the fire before which Michael was lying, and where it was to boil till morning.

Once or twice during the night she came, under pretence of inquiring after the invalid, and to bring him a cordial; she then dipped her fingers into the kettle with the mixture, whereupon the cock, which was perched on a bar, began to crow aloud. Michael wondered at this influence of the broth on the cock, and could not resist the temptation of following her example. He thought that all was not quite right, and feared that the evil one might have some hand in it; but at length his curiosity got the better of his objections. He dipped his fingers into the soup, and touched the tip of his tongue with it, and the cock instantly announced the occurrence in a plaintive tone. Michael now felt himself illuminated with a new, and to him hitherto entirely unknown light, and the affrighted landlady judged it most prudent to let him into her confidence.

Armed with these supernatural endowments, Michael left the house on the following morning. He soon brought some thousands of the devil's best workmen into his power, whom he made so skilful in his trade, that he was able to undertake the buildings of the whole kingdom. To him are ascribed some wonderful works to the north of the Grampians; some of those astonishing bridges which he built in one night, at which only two or three workmen were visible. One day a

work had just been completed, and his people, as they were accustomed to do, thronged round his house, crying out, "Work! work! work!" Displeased at this constant teasing, he called out to them in joke, that they should go and build a road from Fortrose to Arderseir, across the frith of Moray. The cries instantly ceased, and Michael, who considered it impossible to accomplish the task, laughed at them, and remained at home. The following morning, at daybreak, he went to the shore, but how great was his surprise, when he saw that this unparalleled labour had so far succeeded as to require only a few hours to be finished. Uncertain, however, whether it might not prove injurious to trade, he gave orders for demolishing the greater part of the work, and only left in memory of it a piece at Fortrose, which the traveller may behold at this very day.

The fairies, once more out of work, came again with their cries; and Michael, with all his ingenuity, could not devise any harmless employment, till at length he said: "Go and twine ropes which may carry me to the moon, and make them of slime and sea-sand." This procured him rest, and if there was a scarcity of other work, he sent them to make rope. It is true they did not succeed in manufacturing proper ropes, but traces of their labour may be seen to this day on the sea-shore.

Michael Scott, having one day had a quarrel with a person who had offended him, he sent him as a punishment to that unhappy region, where dwells the evil one and his angels. The devil, somewhat displeased at Michael's presumption, showed the new comer the whole extent of hell; and at length also, by way of consolation, the spot he had prepared for Michael; it was filled with the most horrid monsters imaginable, toads, lizards, leeches, and a frightful serpent opened its terrific jaws. Satisfied with this spectacle, the stranger returned to the region of day: he related all that he had seen, and made no secret of what Michael Scott had to expect as soon as he should have passed into the other world. Michael, however, did not lose his courage, and declared that he would disappoint the devil in his expectations. "When I am dead," said he, "open my breast, and take out my heart. Place it on a pole in a public place, where every one may see it. If the devil is to have my soul, he will come and fetch it away, under the form of a black raven; but if it is to be saved, a white dove will bear it off: this shall be a sign to you." After his death they complied with his request: a large black raven came from the east with great swiftness, while a white dove approached with the same velocity from the west. The raven darted violently towards

the heart, missed it, and flew by, while the dove, which reached it at the same time, carried it off, amidst the shouts of the populace.

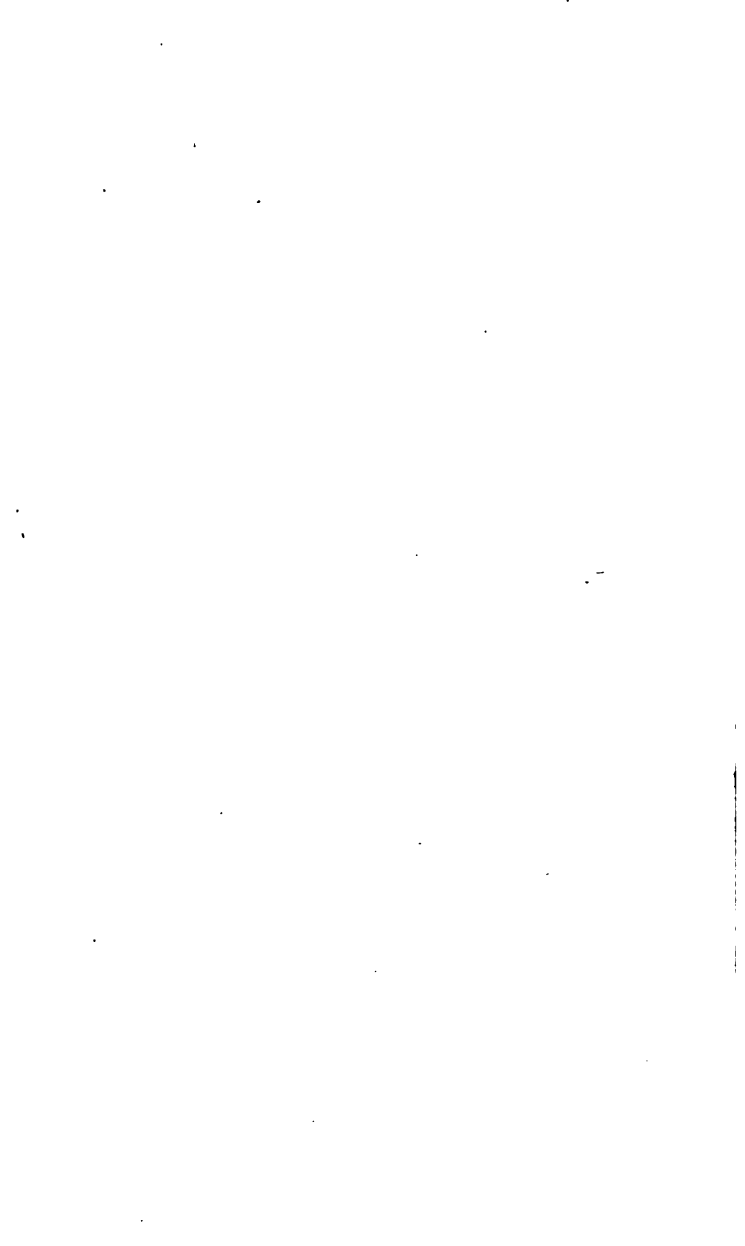
6. *Good Neighbours*.—People endeavour to be on good terms with the Elves, who possess so much power, and are at the same time so capricious. Though every thing fluid which is spilt on the ground is theirs by right, many persons purposely set apart for them a portion of the best things they possess. Sometimes the subterraneous dwellings of the fairies are in the neighbourhood of men; or, as the people express it, “under the threshold;” and then an intercourse with mankind arises by borrowing and lending, and other neighbourly offices. In this quality they are called the good neighbours\*: and they secretly provide for the wants of their friends, and assist them in all their undertakings so long as they do not publish their favours.

A farmer in Strathspey was one day sowing his grounds, at the same time singing a merry tune, when a very beautiful fairy made her appearance. She requested him to oblige her by singing an old Gaelic song; when he had complied, she begged him to make her a present of some corn. He asked her what she would give him for it.

\* The people pay a similar regard even to the devil, and call him the good man.

She replied, that if he granted her request, he should not soon be in want of seed. He gave her a considerable share out of his sack, and she withdrew. Soon after he was agreeably surprised to find that the sack out of which he had already sown a large field did not diminish, and was still the same in weight and size as when he met the fairy. He sowed yet another field without perceiving any decrease. Quite delighted, he returned home; but his loquacious wife, who had a tongue as busy with a head as empty as the great bell of the church steeple, did not cease to proclaim her surprise at this unaccountable property of the sack out of which they had procured seed sufficient to sow the half of their lands. Now it is well known, that if you invoke a supernatural power, the charm is instantly broken. The same was the case in this instance; the sack became immediately empty. "Thou stupid woman!" exclaimed the mortified husband, "hadst thou kept thy troublesome tongue within bounds, the sack would have been worth its weight in gold."

Godfrey Macculloch was one day riding out: he met near his own house a little old man, dressed in green, and mounted on a white horse. They saluted each other, and the little fellow gave him to understand that he lived below his house, and had to make great complaints respecting the course of







The "good Neighbour" spurred his horse.

a drain, which emptied itself exactly in his best apartment. Macculloch was startled at this singular speech, but guessing the nature of the being with whom he had to deal, assured the old man in the most friendly manner, that he would give another direction to the drain ; and immediately commenced the necessary arrangements. Some years after (1697) Macculloch had the misfortune to kill a neighbouring nobleman in a dispute ; he was taken and condemned. The scaffold, on which he was to be beheaded, was prepared on the Castle-hill of Edinburgh, but he had scarcely reached it when the little old man on the white horse rushed through the crowd with the rapidity of lightning. Macculloch, at his bidding, jumped up behind ; the " good neighbour" spurred his horse down the steep declivity, and neither he nor the animal were ever seen afterwards.

7. *Spiteful tricks.*—Necessity does not impel the fairies to rob mankind in secret and with cunning, but a natural inclination seems to actuate them. The whirlwind is not the only artifice of which they avail themselves to steal any object ; they resort to others more pernicious, and cause misfortunes, such as conflagrations, in order to derive advantage from them.

A female fairy, who lived in the towers of Craig-ail-naic, begged a farmer's wife, in Delnabo,

for a little oatmeal, for her family ; promising to return it shortly, as she should soon have a large supply of it herself. The woman being afraid, granted the request of the Elf, and, according to custom, treated her with some liquor, and bread and cheese, and offered to accompany her on the road. As they were going up an eminence above the town, the Banshee stopped, and with evident satisfaction told the woman that she might take her meal home again, she having now obtained the expected supply. The woman, without asking the Elf where she had procured it, took back her own with pleasure, and returned home. But how great was her surprise, when in a few minutes after she beheld the granary of a neighbouring farm in flames.

A farmer, who held the farm of Auchriachan of Strathavon, was one day looking after his goats on a distant hill in Glenlivat, when a thick fog concealed the road, and confused his senses. Every stone was, in his eyes, as large as a mountain ; every little brook seemed to flow in an opposite direction, and the poor wanderer gave up all hopes of ever again reaching his own home. As the night was closing in, he sat down quite exhausted, and expecting his end, when he saw the glimmering of a faint light. At the sight he seemed to acquire fresh strength ; he arose and went towards

it; when he came up with the light, he found that it was a wild and savage place, where human foot had probably never trod; still he took courage, and advanced towards an open door. But how did his resolution fail him when he met an old female friend, whose corpse he had lately accompanied to the grave, and who appeared here to discharge the office of housekeeper! She instantly ran up to him, and told him that he would be a lost man if he did not hide himself in a corner, where he must continue till he could find an opportunity for flight. He took her advice. Scarcely had he concealed himself, when an innumerable assemblage of Fairies, who seemed to have returned from some important expedition, came in very hungry, and called out for food. "What have we to eat?" said they. Then replied a cunning looking old Elf, who was sitting at the fire: "You all know and hate the miserly old fellow of Auchriachan, mean and avaricious as he is; he lets nothing come to us, and even deprives us of our due. From his old grandmother, the witch, he has learnt to protect every thing by a charm, and we can't even glean upon his fields, much less touch the crop. To-night he is from home, as he is seeking his goats, our allies," (for goats are said to have a good understanding with the Elves, and to possess more cunning than

appears at first sight); "his careless people have never thought of taking any precautions; and we can now dispose, at our pleasure, of all his property; come along, and let us fetch his favourite ox for our supper!" "Agreed!" exclaimed all with one voice, "Thomas Rymer is right; the farmer of Auchriachan is a miserable wretch, we will have his ox!" "But where shall we get bread?" said another gray-haired Elf. "We'll also take his new-baked bread," cried the sage counsellor; "he is a poor old creature, and his wife has forgotten to mark the sign of the cross upon the first loaf." The unhappy man overheard all this in his corner, and had besides the mortification to see his ox brought in and killed. While all were busy in preparing the meat, the old woman found an opportunity to let him escape. When he got out the fog was dispersed, the stones appeared in their proper shape, and the moon shone so brightly that he found his way home without any difficulty. His family were overjoyed to see him; and his wife, who thought that he must be hungry, brought some milk and new bread, and invited him to partake of it; but he would not touch it, knowing that the bread was not real bread, but only a shameful illusion. He inquired after his ox, and whether it had been, as usual, protected against evil influence? "Ah, no, dear father! in our great anxiety for you, I

forgot it." "Alas!" cried the disconsolate farmer, "my favourite ox is gone!" "How?" said the son, "I saw it only two hours ago." "That was only a false substitute of the Fairies; bring it hither quickly, that I may get rid of it." And amidst the most violent invectives against the malevolent Elves, he aimed such a desperate blow at its forehead that it fell down dead. It lay there, together with the bread, and neither dog nor cat would touch it.

8. *Changelings.* Among the wicked propensities of the Fairies is their inclination to steal children, in doing which they display particular sagacity. They have often, in broad daylight, taken a favourite child from its inexperienced mother, and substituted a changeling, whose fictitious illness and death makes the lot of the poor parents still more hard. And they have even stolen a child out of its father's arms when he had taken it out with him on horseback.

Two men of Strathspey used to visit a family at Glenlivet for the purpose of dealing in spirits, which could be the most securely carried on during the night. One night, while engaged in measuring the whiskey, an infant, which was lying in the cradle, gave a violent shriek, as if it had been shot. The mother immediately made the sign of the cross over the child, and took it out of the cradle:

the two men took no further notice of it, and, when their business was finished, went away with their load. At a short distance from the house they were surprised to find a little child quite alone in the road. One of them took it up, when it instantly left off crying, threw its arms round his neck, and began to smile. On looking at it more closely, they recognised their friend's child, and directly suspected the Elves, particularly as they remembered the shriek. They had carried off the real child, and put a changeling in its place; but on the mother's making the sign of the cross, it was delivered out of the power of the Fairies, who were forced to abandon it. As their time was limited, and they could not turn back on the spot to explain the mysterious event, they continued their journey, and took every care of the young traveller. A fortnight after, business again brought them to Glenlivat; they carried the child with them, but concealed it on their entrance. The mother began to complain of the obstinate illness of her child, with which it had been afflicted since their last visit, and which would certainly be the cause of its death. At the same moment the changeling uttered lamentable cries, as if in the greatest pain. The strangers told the mother to be of good courage—she should have her own child restored as healthy and lively as a fish in water—

that the mother was nothing but a changeling. The mother received her own child with joy: the men lighted a bundle of straw to throw the changeling in, but at the sight of it the Elf made its escape through the chimney.

If a mother wishes to protect her child against fairies, she must let its head hang down when she is dressing it in the morning. A red thread tied round the throat, or a cross, is likewise a safeguard. If the child has already been exchanged for a fairy, it can be obtained again in the following manner: The changeling is laid before night-fall, in a place where three lands, or three rivers, meet; in the night the Elves bring back the stolen child, put it down, and carry the substitute away with them.

On the east coast of Scotland, the people resort to a peculiar method to avert the danger. During the month of March, when the moon is on her increase, they cut down branches of oak and ivy, which are formed into garlands, and preserved till the following autumn. If any one of the family should grow lean, or a child pine away, they must pass three times through this wreath.

The Elves likewise endeavour to gain possession of women who are near their lying-in; and, as in the case of child-stealing, they substitute a fictitious and illusive being.



At Glenbrowne, in the parish of Abernethy, lived John Roy, a very courageous man. One night he was going over the mountains, when he fell in with a company of Elves, whose mode of travelling clearly indicated that they were carrying a person off with them. He recollected to have been told, that the fairies are obliged to give up what they have, for any thing offered to them in exchange, even if it should be of inferior value. John Roy pulled off his cap, threw it to them, and cried, "Mine is yours, and yours is mine!" upon which the Elves were obliged to take his cap, and resign their prey, which proved to be nothing less than a beautiful woman, by her dress and language a Saxon. John Roy brought her with much kindness to his home, where, for seven years, she was treated with the greatest respect. She gradually accustomed herself to her new mode of life, and was looked upon as a member of the family. It chanced that "the new king" caused the great public road in this neighbourhood to be made by soldiers. John Roy forgot his dislike to a *Saxon*, and offered a lodging, (which could not otherwise have been easily obtained), in his house, to a captain and his son, who commanded a body of workmen in the vicinity. Both the host and his guests were mutually pleased with each other; only it was disagree-

able to Roy that the latter regarded the English lady with so much attention. One day the father said to his son, "I am struck with the resemblance of this woman to my deceased wife; two sisters could not be more like each other, and if it were not morally impossible, I should say that she was my own beloved wife;" at the same time mentioning her name. The woman, attentive to their conversation, on hearing her own name, recognises her husband and son, and runs to embrace them. The Elves who inhabited the Shian of Coirlaggack had undertaken an expedition into the south of England, and made no scruple to steal the woman even during her illness. A false being was laid in her room, who died a few days after; and the husband, supposing it to have been his own wife, had her buried.

( 9. *Elfbolt, weapons, and utensils.* The most shameful action of the Elves, however, is their killing men and animals with a magic weapon generally called an elfbolt. These bolts are of various sizes, of a hard, yellowish substance, resembling flint, which they can always replace. The bolt is frequently in the shape of a heart, the edges sharply indented like a saw. The Fairies shoot this mortal weapon at men and beasts with so much precision that they seldom miss their aim, and the wound is

always fatal. So great is the force with which it strikes, that the moment it touches its object it pierces it to the heart, and in the twinkling of an eye the man or beast lies dead and cold upon the ground. Strange it is, an ordinary man is not able to find the wound, unless he possesses the power which enables some wise people to trace the way by which the bolt came, and to discover it in the dead body. Whoever finds it should preserve it with much care, as the possessor of it is always secured against death from such a weapon.

The rude metal battle-axes which are met with are made by Fairies, who are here hammering in the clefts and caves of rocks. The pierced and rounded stones which are formed by attrition in the beds of the rivers are the dishes and goblets of the Elves.

The lightning sometimes cuts out pieces of turf with extreme regularity: these are supposed to have been dug out by the Elves.

10. *The Elf bull.* In the fine days of autumn, when the fields have been reaped, and a number of cattle are collected together from the different farms, the creatures oftentimes run about and bellow as if mad, though there appears no cause for this confusion. If you look through an Elf's knot-hole, or through the aperture made in the skin of an animal by an elf bolt, you may see the elf

bull butting with the strongest bull in the herd : but this eye is ever after deprived of sight ; and many a one has become blind in this way. The elf bull is small in comparison with the real one ; of a mouse colour, has upright ears, short horns and legs ; his hair is short, smooth, and shining like an otter. He is, besides, supernaturally strong and courageous : he is mostly seen on the banks of rivers, and is fond of eating green grass in the night.

A farmer who lived near a river had a cow which regularly every year, on a certain day in May, left the meadow and went slowly along the banks of the river till she came opposite to a small island overgrown with bushes ; she went into the water and waded or swam towards the island, where she passed some time, and then returned to her pasture. This continued for several years ; and every year, at the usual season, she produced a calf which perfectly resembled the elf bull. One afternoon, about Martinmas, the farmer, when all the corn was got in and measured, was sitting at his fireside, and the subject of the conversation was, which of the cattle should be killed for Christmas. He said : “ We ’ll have the cow ; she is well fed, and has rendered good services in ploughing, and filled the stalls with fine oxen : now we will pick

her old bones." Scarcely had he uttered these words when the cow with her young ones rushed through the walls as if they had been made of paper, went round the dunghill, bellowed at each of her calves, and then drove them all before her, according to their age, towards the river, where they got into the water, reached the island, and vanished among the bushes. They were never more heard of.

11. *Sea Elves.* On the north coast of Scotland dwelt a man who got his living by fishing, and particularly by catching those singular creatures called seals, for the skins of which he was well paid. Yet most of these are neither seals nor fish, but are properly Elves. One day, as the fisherman was returning from his business, he was called by a person who appeared to be a stranger, and who told him that he had been sent by one who wished to bargain with him for a number of seals' skins, but that he must instantly accompany him. The fisherman, overjoyed at the prospect of a good job, consented, and mounting a horse which belonged to the stranger, he rode with him so swiftly that the wind, which was in their backs, seemed, from the rapidity of their motion, to blow in their faces. They reached a frightful crag which projected into the sea, when the guide said

they had now come to the place of their destination; and seizing the fisherman with more than human strength, threw himself with him into the sea. They sunk, and sunk, till they came at length to an open door at the bottom, through which they entered into a suite of rooms, all filled with seals, which, however, have the power of language, and possess human feelings; at length the fisherman, to his utmost surprise, found that, without being aware of it, he had himself been changed into a seal. His guide produced an enormous knife, and he already thought that his end was come; when the latter quieted his fears, and asked him if he had never before seen the knife? He recognised it to be his own, with which he had that morning wounded a seal, which, however, had escaped. "That was my father," said his guide; "he lies dangerously ill, and cannot recover without your assistance." He brought the terrified fisherman to the patient, who was lying, in great pain, in a bed: the man was obliged to dress the wound, and the seal immediately recovered. The mourning was now converted into general joy. The guide said to the fisherman, "I will myself bring you back to your family, but you must promise that you will not kill another seal as long as you live." Both swam

towards the surface, and landed at a place where they found horses ready for them. The guide breathed on the fisherman, and both received the human form. At the door of his house he received a present so large as not to leave any cause of regret at having renounced his trade.

12. *The Brownie.* He never speaks of his descent, but seems upon the whole to belong to the Elves. His figure is not very slim, but well proportioned and agreeable; while others represent him as lean and rough coated. He derives his name from his peculiarly brown colour. He is industrious, intent on his master's service, and always willing. According to some, he remains concealed in his corner night and day; and according to others, only in the daytime, and works at night. He labours for scanty fare, and sometimes cast-off clothes; nay, he even vanishes when any other recompense is given him. So cheap and useful a servant is naturally very valuable, but cannot be obtained with money. He continues in a family so long as a member of it survives, and hence he is the heir-loom of an ancient and respected house. Besides unparalleled fidelity, he is unremitting in promoting his master's interest; and his services are still further enhanced by the gift of foretelling future events. He maintains a

strict watch over the servants, reports their good and bad actions, and they are therefore but seldom on friendly terms with him : if he is left to their mercy, his fidelity is not likely to meet with any extraordinary reward. The master who regards his own interest must take care that the Brownie properly receives his food. He likes to lie down at night near the fire ; and if the servants loiter too long around the hearth, he seems apprehensive of losing his place, and several times makes his appearance at the door, as if it was his business to see that they retire in proper time, and exhorts them, saying, " Go to bed, and I'll mind the fire !"

A certain family had a Brownie, and the mistress of the house being taken in labour, a servant was desired to go to Jedburgh for a midwife ; but being rather dilatory, the Brownie slipped into his great coat, rode on his master's best horse to town, and took the woman up behind him. Meantime the Tweed, through which they must necessarily pass, had swollen ; the Brownie, who rode with the velocity of a spirit, was not to be stopped ; he plunged into the water with the poor old woman, and they reached the house in safety. When he had taken the horse into the stable, where it was afterwards found in a very miserable condition, he went into the servant's room, whom he found just about



to put on his boots, and gave him some hearty blows with his own whip. So extraordinary a service excited his master's gratitude; and as he thought he had understood that the Brownie wished to have a green coat, he had one made and laid in his accustomed corner. The Brownie received the present, but was never heard of more. Perhaps he went in his green dress to join the fairies.

The last Brownie that was known in the forest of Ettrick dwelt in Bodsbeck, a wild and solitary valley, where he lived in perfect tranquillity till the officious piety of an old woman obliged him to remove, as she had a dish of milk, with a piece of money, placed in his abode. After this hint to depart he was heard crying and lamenting the whole night, "Farewell, dearest Bodsbeck!" which he was now compelled to leave for ever.

Formerly every family of consequence had its Brownie, but now they have become more rare. The two last that were known in the Highlands belonged to the ancient family of Tullochgorm in Strathspey; they were a man and his wife. The man, of a droll and merry disposition, often made game of people; he was particularly fond of pelting those who passed by with lumps of earth, whence he received the name of Brownie-clod. However, with all his good humour, he was rather simple;

and was tricked by those whom he himself intended to trick. The best instance is an agreement which he was foolish enough to make with the servants of Tullochgorm, and by which he engaged himself to thrash as much corn as two men could do in the whole winter; for this he was to receive an old coat and a Kilmarnock cap, to which he seemed to have taken a great fancy. While the servants lay down in the straw and idled away their time, poor Brownie thrashed without ceasing: in short, before the agreement was completed, the men, out of gratitude and compassion, put the coat and cap into a corn measure in the barn. He instantly left off work, and said contemptuously, that as they had been simple enough to give him the coat and cap before the end of his task, he would take good care, and not thrash a single sheaf more.

His wife, on the contrary, instead of being the sport of the maids with whom she worked, was a sort of mistress among them. She was seldom on good terms with them, on account of the fidelity with which she acquainted her master with every neglect of their duty. She had a profusion of hair on her head, whence she was called hairy Mag (*Maug vuluchd*). She was an honest and able housekeeper, and particularly clever in waiting at

table. The care with which she invisibly set out the table was a most entertaining sight to strangers; the thing asked for came as if by magic, and placed itself on the table with the greatest speed and nicety: she had no equal in the whole country for cleanliness and attention.



ON THE

NATURE OF THE ELVES.

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THE Scotch traditions contain the most complete system of belief in a people of spirits invisibly filling all nature, and nearly connected with mankind ; and therefore deserved the preceding detailed account, in which we have consulted all accessible sources. With respect to what is new in this work concerning Ireland, the foregoing view seemed to be useful to facilitate the understanding of it. The traditions of other countries, as far as we are acquainted with them, are, on the whole, more incomplete, though in parts sometimes more detailed. To continue in this manner, and treat of every people by itself, would, indeed, offer some advantages ; but, on account of the many and yet necessary repetitions, occupy more room than can be allowed for this

introduction. It therefore seemed more to the purpose to select the principal points; and, in considering them, to notice the peculiarities of other nations, as well as the important coincidence and the remote antiquity of the whole.

The method we have pursued is different from that adopted by Sir Walter Scott, in the before-mentioned treatise, which is undoubtedly valuable for its contents. He endeavours, in a manner which appears to us too arbitrary, being founded on mere supposition, to elucidate various parts of this belief in spirits; a belief said to be established on history, which is presumed to have given the present form, although it is very much on the decline. Our object, on the contrary, is to represent it as something which, so long as it subsisted, must have been a complete and connected whole. By not confounding different ages, but, on the contrary, separating each, and showing the great influence of Christianity in effecting changes in it, we think that we preserve the right of historical investigation. It was, therefore, part of our object to seek the earliest traces of the existence of fairies: they have confirmed, and even explained, the still existing belief, or derived light from it.

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## 1. NAME.

That the word *Elf* is the most general expression in our (the German) language for these spiritual beings, is evident from the examination of every dialect of the German. More restrictive appellations were afterwards introduced, or the name itself was lost.

1. The form *Alp* belongs to the high German language; which simple word is not, indeed, met with in any ancient document previous to the thirteenth century; without doubt, merely because there was no occasion to make mention of a heathen notion despised by the learned. The expression, however, must have been current in the remotest ages. A number of masculine and feminine proper names are formed and compounded with it: *Alpinc*, *Alpirih*, *Alpkôz*, *Alpkast*, *Alphart*, *Alpkêr*, *Alpwin*, *Alphâri*, *Alptac*, *Alphilt*, *Alplint*, *Alploug*, *Alpsuint*, *Westralp*, which clearly shows that no evil or odious idea was attached to it.

The middle high German poets sometimes use this expression, though in general very rarely. It is usually in the masculine form. In the old *Meistergesangbuch* (Book of the Meister-Singers), 37<sup>b</sup>, the poet addresses God: *Got unde niht alp*;

"God, no deceitful spirit!" *Zer wilder albe klúsen*, in Parc. 46<sup>a</sup>, is, indeed, uncertain, as it may signify, "to the haunt of wild spirits," and, also, "to the wild Alpine, or mountain retreats." (Vide Barl. 194, *gein den wilden alben*, and Parc. 62<sup>a</sup> *zer wilden muntáne*.) The following passages more clearly indicate the spirit.

A travelling student (Altd. Wäld. ii. 55) mentions a remedy good against the Alp (*guot vür den Alp*). Most of the allusions are in the still inedited poem of Ruodigers, the *zwein Gesellen* (Königsberg MS.) 12<sup>a</sup>.

*dich hat geriten der mar,  
ein Elblischez ás.  
dú solt daz übele getwás  
mit dem kriuze vertriben;  
sit, daz hât man von in wiben,  
swenne uns mannen iht geschehe;  
daz ir immer des jehet  
uns triege der Alp\*.*

And immediately after:

*dir enhât nieman niht getân  
wan so vil, daz dich zonmet*

\* The night mare has ridden thee, an *Elvish* monster; you should drive away the evil spirit (illusion?) with the cross; see that is what we get by you women, when it happens to us men then you always fancy the *Alp* deceives us.



*ein Alp, davon dir troumet ;  
der var der Sonnen haz\*.*

The last line is also a form of imprecation.  
And 14<sup>b</sup>:

*in bedúhte, daz er vlúge,  
oder daz in líhte trúge  
ein Alp in sime troume†.*  
14<sup>c</sup>: *ez gezáme michel baz,  
daz dú mit zúhten lágēs  
unt solher ruowe pfúges,  
als úf der beite wúre  
denm elbischen gebúre‡.*

Farther on, 16<sup>d</sup>:

*ich sehe wol, daz dú elbisch bist§ ;*  
17<sup>e</sup>: *ein elbische ungehiure !  
sprach sie, dú sist verwázen || !*  
18<sup>f</sup>: *nú sagú mir, elbischez getwás.  
vil rehte dinen namen ¶.*

In another poem (Old Meister, Singers-book,  
2<sup>b</sup>):

\* No one has done any thing to you ; it may be that  
an *Alp* plagues you, of which you dream, which is odious to  
the sun !

† Tell him that he flies, or that, perhaps, an *Alp* deceives  
him in his dreams.

‡ It would be more proper Michael baz that you should  
lie still, as on a bed, than behave yourself in such an Elfish  
manner.

§ I plainly see that thou art Elfish.

|| Cursed be thou, thou Elvish monster !

¶ Now tell me truly, Elvish illusion, thy name.

*elbe triegent niht so vil junge  
unde alte, als ez mich tuot* \*.

Herbort (Trojan war, 84<sup>c</sup>) speaks of *elbischem viure* (ignes fatui); but instead of *der alp*, he seems to use the neuter *daz alp*, or *elbe*. Plural, *diu elber* (idem 5<sup>d</sup>):

*diu elber triegent mich* †  
and 6<sup>a</sup>: *unreinez getwâs* ‡;

in the same manner at an earlier period; besides the masculine, *der tiuvel*, *daz tiuvel*, plural, *diu tiuveler* (old high German *diufilir*, Otfr. iii. 14. 103) was used. Otherwise the devil of Christianity, whom we conceive as masculine, is often in the old German language feminine; because, according to our popular belief, witch and sorceress were more familiar than the evil spirit and enchanter. Ulfilas says, rather *unhulthô* than *unhultha*; and in old high German documents (hymn xxiv. 3. gloss. Ker. 85), *diabolus*, instead of the masculine *unholdo*, is translated by the feminine *unholdâ*. German fables, at least, give the devil a grandmother; and the evil genius *Grendel*, in the Anglo-Saxon poem, is assisted by his still

\* An *Elf* does not deceive so many young and old as it does me.

† The Elves deceive me.

‡ Impure illusion.

more wicked mother. We may, therefore, be the less surprised that the feminine *diu alp*, genitive *der elbe*, occurs. Henry of Morunge says (MS. i. 50<sup>b</sup>),

*von der elbe wirt entsehen vil maniger man,  
als wart ich von grözer liebe entsehen.*

That is, Many people have been bewitched by the *Alp*; so have I been bewitched by love. The meaning of *entsehen* (bewitched) is confirmed by the following passage from the inedited Eraclius, line 3329—3335 :

*ich sage in guotiu märe,  
sprach diu alte, do sie sie ersach,  
iuwers kindes ungemach  
kan ich wol vertriben,  
hie geredet under uns wiben,  
ich hân in geseget, er was entsehen,  
im sol arges niht geschehen\*.*

Besides this restricted meaning of a nocturnal spirit oppressing mankind, the older, and, originally, more common signification for spirit in general might have subsisted, as may be inferred, partly from the *Elberich* of the *Nibelungen* and

\* "I will tell you a good tale," said the old woman when she perceived it, "your child's illness I can cure: here—spoken among us women—I have charmed him; if he has seen any thing no harm shall happen to him."

the Heldenbuch ; partly from a passage in the German translation of Ovid's *Metamorphoses* (B. v. chap. 9), where the expression the *Elben* and *Elbinnen* occurs. Wikram probably met with it in the work of Albrecht of Halberstadt, which he paraphrased. In the legend of Brandan (Bruns, p. 195), we meet with the following :

“ *to hant kam de dâvel allenthalven  
lôpen mit glêenden alven* \*.”

Here, therefore, the fiery spirits are called Elves of hell.

At present, only the superstitious belief of the pressing and suffocation by the Alp continues in Germany with the old name : all other stories of spirits are ascribed to dwarfs, wights, and not to Elves (*Elben*), though this expression is occasionally even met with in the later trials of witches †. We should have avoided the term *Elfen*, which is not high German, and was never current among the people, had it not been introduced by the poets of the last century in translations from the English, without regard to the

\* “ The devil came running every where with *fiery alves*.”

† Vide Pomarius Colleg. Synopt. Phys. disp. 13. sent. 23, 24. 26, and Prætorius's Geography, i. 181, 182.

peculiarity of our language ; so that it has now become familiar.

2. The French have taken from the German the word *Alp* for Spirit, but have changed it to suit their language into *Aube*, for so we must understand the word *Auberon*, afterwards *Oberon*, which occurs in an old French tradition. It nearly corresponds with our *Elberich*, and has all the qualities of the benevolent Elves. From this ancient French source the English poets have borrowed their Elfin king *Oberon*, which they would more properly have translated by *Elfric*, since *Ob* signifies nothing more than the English word *Elf*.

3. In Anglo Saxon words we meet as well with the simple *âlf* as with the compounds *Alfric*, *Alfred*, &c. The feminine is *alfen*, genitive, *alfenne*. Respecting the older and more extensive signification, there can be no doubt ; *mägälf* and *älfscīne* are used in poems as epithets applied to men (*Cædm.* 40. 58. *Beov.* 194. *Jud.* 9.) No traditions seem to have been preserved. In MSS. we indeed meet with the expressions *dūnālfenne* (monticolæ, castalides), *feldālfenne* (naiades, hamadryades), *muntālfenne* (oreades), *sæālfenne* (naiades), *vudālfenne* (dryades) ; but they appear rather to have been made for the translation of Greek words, than to teach us any distinctions among our indi-

genous spirits. Later old English poets contain numerous examples of the general continuance of the word, and of the thing. It will be sufficient to subjoin a few from the *Canterbury Tales*.

5174, the mother was an elve by aventure,  
ycome by charmes or by sorcerie.

6442, the elfquene with hire joly compaignie  
danced ful oft in many a grene mede,  
this was the old opinion, as I rede,  
I speke of many hundred yeres ago,  
but now can no man see non elves mo.

13718, 13720, 13724, an *elfquene*; 13633, *se semeth elvish* by his countenance; 16219, *elvish* craft; 16310, *elvish* nice. Many more are found in Spenser and Shakespeare\*, and the almost synonymous term of Fairy has gradually become more common. Now, though this *Elf* has sometimes entirely the meaning of the later high German *Alp*, and *elvish* precisely that of fantastic, yet there is a series of genuine Elfin tales by the old name, without this restriction to mere enchantment.

4. The northern traditions and poems have preserved this denomination in the greatest purity

\* Mr. Voss, in his remarks on the *Midsummer Night's Dream*, p. 509—511, has enumerated the properties of the Fairies in Shakespeare, in which the poet may perhaps have a considerable share, though upon the whole he has taken the popular belief as the foundation.

and in the original extensive signification. Old Norwegian *álfr*, plural *álfar*; Swedish *elf*, pl. *elfar*, of which the feminine plural *elfvor* is frequently used; Danish *elv*, pl. *elve*; in composition at present, *ellefolk*, *ellekone*, *ellekonge*, instead of *elvefolk*, &c.; from which *ellekonge*, the incorrect German termination *erlkönig*, has originated by a misunderstanding, as the spirit has nothing to do with the erle tree, Danish *elle*, old Norwegian *elni* (*alnus*).

5. The original meaning of the word *alp*, *älf*, *álfr*, is probably connected with the Latin *albus* (white); compare the Greek *ἄλφειτον* (flour) *ἄλφειτοι*, a female spirit, of which people were afraid (white woman?); but not with the Latin *alpes* (mountains). It is also connected with the general name of rivers, *Elbe*, *elf*, *albis* (French *aube*), without our however being obliged to conclude that the Elfs are water spirits, which is only sometimes the case.

## 2. DEGREES AND VARIETIES.

THE traditions which represent the fairies as angels expelled from heaven and half devoted to hell, and, therefore, as half devilish beings\*, have

\* Vide the Irish Legend, No. 4 of the "Priest's Supper," and the note upon it, where the similar Danish and Scotch tradition is quoted. In Sweden too it is every where known,

a counterpart, which already existed, explained on Christian principles; but it was probably of earlier date. The Edda distinguishes white shining Elves of light, and black Elves of darkness, not as good and evil, but to designate them as the spirits of the different regions; of the brilliant heaven and the gloomy earth. This is manifest from the circumstance that the black Elves are called also dwarfs (in the same manner as a dwarf, in the Kenningar, bears the name of *Alf*), this being the peculiar expression for subterraneous spirits dwelling in dark mountain caves. The Elves of light, of a pure colour, seem nearly transparent, quite ethereal, with white garments, shining like silver, as in the Irish legend. In German traditions (No. 10 and 11) they are represented as

only (and that is remarkable) with a contrary solution. (Schwedische Volklieder, iii. 128). Two children are playing on the banks of a river—a Nix (a water sprite) was sitting on the water playing on his harp. The children call to him—"Of what use is it that you sit there and play, you will not be saved." The Nix cried bitterly, threw aside his harp, and sank to the bottom. When the children returned home to their father they related what had happened. The father bid them go back, comfort the Nix, and give him the assurance of his redemption. On reaching the river, they found the Nix sitting on the water and crying. "Nix, do not grieve," said they; "father says that thy Redeemer also liveth." Upon this the Nix took up his harp and played a cheerful air. (See also iii. 158.)



snow white virgins sitting in the sunshine ; appear at noon (No. 12) ; and are not permitted to remain after the setting of the sun ; which is hence called in the Edda (Säm. i. 70 and 231) *álfrödull*, “ shining on the Elves.” The terrestrial Elves, on the contrary, are corporeal, and of a dark colour ; hence in Norway they are called *blue*, in the same sense as in the Norwegian language a negro is called *blámadr* : the Scotch Brownie is brown and shaggy, like the wild Berta in the German tradition (No. 268) ; and brown dwarfs in Northumberland are mentioned in a note to Scott’s *Lady of the Lake*. The terrestrial fairies, also, wear dresses of a dark colour : they appear only in the night ; and, unlike the Elves of light, avoid the sun ; which is hence called in the Edda (*Hamdismál Str. i.*) “ the dread of the Elves” (*græti álfa*). If daylight surprises them, the rays of the sun change them into stone. (See Edda, Säm. i. 274, ii. 44.)

This distinction of course ceased when reference was made to moral qualities, and the two kinds of Elves were confounded ; but that in Germany the notion of the Elves of light existed, (and, perhaps, in direct opposition to later times, was the more general), is shown, not only from the already explained affinity of the word with the Latin *albus*, but by the circumstance, that after

the conversion, the Christian *engil* was used just in the same manner as *Alp* had been before in the composition of proper names, and so far took its place; for example, *Engilrich*, *Engilhart*, *Engilgér*, &c. Among the Anglo-Saxons, composition produces *Älfscine*, i. e. shining like an Elf.

*Elberich* affords the best instance of the mixture of the two kinds. His very name discovers his origin. In the *Nibelungen* (1985), and in *Otnit* (Str. 127, Mone), he is called a *wildez getwerc* (a wild dwarf): he hammers and dwells in mountain caves, and yet he is superior in intellect; and externally brilliant, where he appears in the latter poem, of which he is in fact the hero. In Norwegian traditions it is indicated that the dwarf is more corporeal and less spiritual than the Elf; but the more intimate his connexion with man the more human are his wants. As a domestic spirit, he serves for food and clothing, while he can perform wonderful things, and is a being at once in need of help and possessed of supernatural power.

The expressions *wichte*, *schräte*, *schretlein*, signify nothing more than the little subterraneous beings, or dwarfs, though to that particular denomination a peculiar indistinct secondary meaning, often difficult to be defined, may be attached.

We will subjoin the passages in which we have met with these names:

Glossae Lindenbrog. 995<sup>a</sup>, fauni, silvestres homines: *waltscrechel*, which run about the forest. 996<sup>b</sup>, larvæ, lares mali: *screza*. Gl. Vindob. larvæ: *screzzol scraito*. Gl. Trev. *screis*, larvæ, and inserted by a later hand: *Klein herchin*. Barlaam, 251, 11. *ein wilder waltschrate* (a wild mountain schrate), and Alt. Wälder, iii. 225, where it stands for faun. *Schretel* in Cod. Palat. No. 341. f. 371. Titurel, 190, *sie ist villihte ein schrat' ein geist von helle*. (She is perhaps a schrat, a spirit of hell.) Hans Vintler's Tugendbuch of the year 1411 (according to the Gotha MS.):

——— *etliche die jehent,  
daz Schretlin daz si ein kleinez kint  
unde si als ringe als der wint  
unde si ein verzwivelöter geist* \*.

In Joke Vocab. 1482. Schretlin, penates, *unreinez wiht* (Duitiska, i. 13), *unreiner Schraz* (Aldt. Wälder, iii. 170), *Schrabaz* (Titurel, 4164), *Schrawaz* (Gudrun, 448), *waltschrate* (see Herrad. 200<sup>b</sup>); ephialtes, *daz nacht schrettele* (Dasypod, p. 292<sup>a</sup>, and 45<sup>b</sup>).

The Norwegian *Vaettur* answers to the German

\* Some who fancy that the *Schretlin* is a little child, and as swift as the wind, and that it is a fallen angel.

and Anglo-Saxon *wiht*; *hollar vaettir*, amiable spirits, are invoked in the Edda (Oddrúnar grátr, viii.), *wihtel* in Cod. Palat. No. 341. Wolfdietrich, Str. 789. 799. *Kleinez wihtelin* (little wight), Liedersaal, i. 378. 380. *Kleinez wihtelin, ez moht kálme elnlanc sin* (little wight, it might scarce be an ell \* high.) Vocab. 1482. *Wihtelin*, penates, See gl. blas. 87<sup>a</sup>, *wihsilstein* (penas), perhaps *wihtilstein*? yet gl. trev. 36<sup>b</sup>, have *wihilstein*.

The water, too, is inhabited by fairies; and as this element is shining and transparent, they appear to be classed among the Elves of light. They are called *Nixen*, *Nökken* (old high German, *nihhus*, pl. *nihhussd*) by Conrad of Würzburg, Man. Samml. ii. 200<sup>b</sup>, the *vertánen wazzer-nixen*; *wassermänner*, and *wasserfrauen*, *schwanen-jungfrauen*: and as they wear garments white as swans, it follows that they do not belong to the black Elves. Wikram, 171<sup>a</sup>, calls them *wazzerholde*.

The Christian notion of many, especially Scotch and Danish, traditions, which represent the fairies as heathens, and associates of the devil, though it was adopted by the poets of the middle ages, was not generally received, as many of the already quoted passages prove. The dwarf, who in Ottonkar of Horneck appears to the Scherfenberger,

\* The German ell is only two feet.

has the Christian faith (*Deutsche Sagen*, No. 29): Elberich himself is a Christian (*Otnit*, *Strophe* 283), and even assists in converting and baptising the heathens. (*Str.* 351 and 504.) In the German traditions, which are still current, they are frequently represented as good and benevolent spirits, and particularly as Christians; they pray, exhort mankind to piety, abhor swearing, and are highly incensed if they are taken for unclean spirits. A domestic spirit repeats the Lord's prayer and the creed (*Deut. Sag.* i. p. 113), though not quite perfect, muttering unintelligibly some parts, while the Scotch Elf, who converses with the priest, changes some passages.

### 3. EXTINCTION.

The traditions respecting the gradual disappearance of fairies are generally spread, and most probably arose through the introduction of Christianity. They do not merely withdraw from the noise and bustle of men, but there is a general emigration of the subterraneous beings. They enter into an agreement with men, and are heard tripping away, in countless multitudes, in the night, by a way before determined on, over a bridge; or they are conveyed over the water, and their great number almost causes the ship to sink.

(Deutsche Sagen, No. 152—154. Danish, Thiele, ii. 2.) It is said, that by way of remembrance, or out of gratitude for the favours they have received from man, each deposited a small coin, of ancient date, in a dish placed there for the purpose.

Some persons have fancied that they recognised in the emigration of the dwarfs an historical fact—the oppression and expulsion of an ancient aboriginal people by new comers, which the trait of shyness, sorrow, and irony, that is diffused in the character of these spirits, seems to confirm.

#### 4. FORM.

If you see an Elf in his true form, he appears like a beautiful child, a few years old, delicate and well-shaped: the Scotch and Welsh legends describe him decidedly in this manner. Elberich is lying, under the form of a child of four years old, beneath a lime tree, where Otnit sees him, by virtue of a ring, and purposes to carry him off as a child. (Str. 99. 108.) And when the Elf shows himself to men, it is said (Str. 517), “*Ich wäne daz nie kein ouge schöner bilde ie gesach*\*.”

In the Wilkina Saga (chap. xxvi.), the fairy begs of Dieterich, who has laid hold of him, “that he would not squeeze his little body and tender

\* I ween that no eye ever saw a fairer form.

limbs." In the same manner it is related of Oberon, in the French traditions, that he is only three feet high, but has a face of such exquisite beauty that none can behold without delight, p. 28: "Oberon, qui n'a que trois pieds de hauteur, il est tout bossu, mais il a un visage angélique, il n'y a personne sur la terre, qui le voyant ne prenne plaisir à le considérer, tant il est beau." Hinzelmann (*Deutsche Sagen*, No. 75) shows himself to boys with whom he is playing, as one of themselves, but with a beautiful countenance. With this agrees the notion of the Norwegians, who imagine the Elves to be little naked beings. The beauty of the female fairies is represented in the Scotch, Irish, Danish, and Swedish traditions, to be in the highest degree attractive and fascinating, far beyond all human beauty. They are described in the same manner by Swabian legends in the *Mägdleinsfelsen* (V. Gustav Schwab *die Schwäb. Alb.* Stutgard, 1823, p. 71), and the water virgins enrapture all men. (*Deutsche Sag.* No. 58. 60.)

2. The Scotch and Welsh traditions particularly mention that the fairies of both sexes are adorned with long hair, and hence a Brownie is called "hairy Mag." Sir Walter Scott, in his notes to the *Lady of the Lake*, p. 387, mentions a Northumberland dwarf who had curled red hair. The Swedish woman of the forest is of short stature, with fair

locks, as well as the Nix. This trait is not wanting in the German traditions: the domestic spirit, and a beautiful female fairy, who appears at noon, have ringlets of yellow hair floating over their shoulders (Deut. Sag. No. 11. 65. 75): a mountain woman has such beautiful hair, that a man falls in love with her, and his wife, who sees her asleep, cries out, "God preserve thy fine hair!" (Deut. Sag. No. 50.) In another similar tradition (Strack. Beschr. von Eilsen, p. 120), she actually cuts off one of the fairy's fine long tresses, which the latter afterwards urgently requests her to return. The female fairies in the north dance with their tresses unbound. (Thiele, iii. 44. Schwed. Lieder, iii. 165.) They seem to bestow particular attention in combing their long hair. Dame Holle or Hulda, who without doubt belonged to them (*Huldevolk* is still the name of fairies in the Faro islands, and *Huldrer* that of the female fairies in Norway), is very fond of having her hair combed. (See Hausmärchen, iii. 44.) The water Elves are seen engaged in this occupation (Schwedische Lieder, iii. 148); and Waldron, p. 128, relates of a changeling, that if left by himself it was discovered, on returning to him, he had been carefully combed, probably by some of his own tribe. The domestic spirit is very fond of currying the horses. The black Elves, on the contrary, entangle men's hair,



and twist the tails and manes of horses into knots: *elf locks, elvish knots*. (Vide the passages in Nares). German, *elf klatte* (Brem. Dictionary, i. 302), and *mahrenzopf*.

3. The mixture of the heavenly and terrestrial Elves explains why in the traditions of these fairies they are described at the same time as young and beautiful, and as old and ugly. The dwarf, too, has the infant form, but is aged and disagreeable in appearance, has a long nose, and is of a dark bluish gray, or earth-brown colour, as was stated before. As the light never shines on him, his face resembles that of a corpse; hence, in the Edda (Alvismál, ii.) the god says to the dwarf: "Why is thy nose so pale; wast thou with a corpse in the gloom of night?" Hagen (Wilkins Saga, chap. 150) has a *pale ash gray* countenance, because he is the son of an Elf. He is also deformed. A hump is improperly ascribed to Oberon (*il est tout bossu*), it belongs to the black Elves. (Vide Thiele, i. 121, 122.) Elberich shows here how apt the traditions were to make this confusion: while in Otnit he is described as a beautiful child, he appears in the Nibelungen as a bearded old man: 2001. "*Dô vienc er (Siegfried) bi dem barte den altgrisen man\**." And his own age is also mentioned by

\* Then he (Siegfried) took the gray old man by his beard.

the child in Otnit, str. 252. "*Ich trage uf minem rücken mé dan vierdehalb hundert jar\**." Just the same as the Elfin changeling in the German *Kindermärchen* (i. 205) exclaims: "Now I am as old as the Wester Wald;" which may be compared with the corresponding passage in the Irish (p. 38) and Danish legends (Thiele, i. 48). An old Welsh poem (*Fairy Tales*, p. 195, 196) calls the fairies "wry-mouthed." The Cluricaune is ugly, and his aged face resembles a shrivelled apple: this is also the appearance of the Elf of Bottle-hill, and he is described in precisely the same manner by Gervase of Tilbury, in the thirteenth century, in a remarkable passage which we shall quote at length hereafter. The dwarfs of the mountains in the German legends are always old and gray-headed. The Nix is represented in Sweden as diminutive, with gold-coloured locks, or old, and with a beard: he is frequently seen sitting on the rocks and wringing out his beard. (Schwed. Volkslieder, iii. 133.)

In the composition of names the Christian *Engil*, as we have already observed, took the place of the heathen *Alp*; a contrary process seems to have occurred in the arts. There is nothing in the Bible or in the Fathers of the Church, which warrants

\* I carry on my back more than three centuries and a half.

the adoption of a diminutive form of the angels, but the people had been used to fancy the Elves to be children of great beauty. This idea was transferred to the spiritual beings of Christianity. It is deserving of a more accurate investigation at what period these little angels were first introduced into pictures and statuary, and also when the diminutive *Englein* was first used. It must have begun in the twelfth or thirteenth century. In Otfried and other German writers of the ninth and tenth centuries, the angels are always represented as youths, and called the messengers of God. This had been altered about the year 1250. Berthold, a Bavarian clergyman, who died in the year 1272, and was distinguished for his animated and popular eloquence, said, in his sermon, of the holy angels (Kling's edit. p. 184), "*Ir sehet wol, das si allesamt sint juncliche gemälet, als ein kint, das dâ viinf jâr alt ist swâ man sie mâlet\**." The same allusion is made in other sermons (p. 238. 282). The small form of the angels does not seem to have been derived from the genii of the Greeks and Romans, though perhaps their wings may; no genuine tradition gives wings to the fairies. Might not the dwarf's name, *Euglin*, in the poem of *Hürnin Siegfried*, be more correctly

\* You see that they are all painted young, like a child of five years old.

Englin, and be a mere translation of the older Elberich? Even the Egwald in the 'Volksbuch,' might be explained from Engelwald.

### 5. DRESS.

1. We have already noticed the variety in the dress of the fairies according to the difference of their origin, and have now only to observe, that the Servian *Vilen*, which answers to the female fairies of the north, are dressed in white. Elberich wears a shining garment adorned with gold and precious stones. (Str. 104.) In the German (No. 48. 270), as well as in the Welsh, Scotch, and Shetland legends, the dress of the subterraneous tribes is of a dark tint, generally green or moss-coloured. In the Faro islands and Denmark, gray (Thiele, i. 122. 125); though here, too, Elves attired in green sometimes occur. Spirits which are connected with men wear variegated and red coats (Deut. Sag. No. 71. 75), or they receive them as presents from men (No. 37). That in Iceland the Elves were supposed to wear variegated and red dresses, is proved from Njala, p. 70, where a person gaily dressed (*í lit-kledum*) is ironically called *raud-álfr*. There is a remarkable coincidence. In the Irish legend of Bottle-hill, the Elf appears entirely wrapped up in his garment in order to conceal his feet: a

Swiss tradition says the dwarfs tripped along in large cloaks which quite covered their feet. A person, out of curiosity, strews ashes on the ground, and discovers that their feet are broad like those of geese, though such appear to belong properly to the water Elves: we may also mention the white Bertha with the large foot. (See Altd. Wälder, iii. 47, 48.)

2. The hood or cap is of particular importance; insomuch so, that the Norwegian Elves, though otherwise without clothing, wear a slouched hat. The Irish fairies make use, for this purpose, of the red flowers of the magic foxglove, or they have broad white hats like mushrooms. In Denmark and Sweden, too, they wear their caps of a red colour (Thiele, i. 122. ii. 3. Schwed. Volksl. iii. 127), as do also the *Nisser*, in the Faroes; otherwise they are black in these islands. In Prussia their hats are pointed and cocked like that of the Claricaune: the caps also of the domestic spirits in Denmark are pointed; while the hats which they wear in summer are round (Thiele, i. 135). In the German traditions the hat is not wanting. The little men of the mountains have white hoods attached to their dress (No. 37). The Nix wears a green hat (No. 52); and another gay spirit a large slouched hat (No. 271). Hodeken has derived his name from a large

hat, which he wore so low over his forehead that nobody could ever see his face ; and this hat produces in some measure the effect of the *nebel-kappe* (mist-hood), which renders the wearer perfectly invisible, which is already alluded to by the young Misener (Man. S. ii. 156), and which is assigned to the dwarfs of the Hartz mountains (Deutsche Sagen, No. 152, 153. 155). There is an evident connexion between this and Elberich's *tarn-kappe*, though it also includes the cloak, and answers to the *tarnhût*. He and his kingdom became subject to Siegfried, because the hero had taken his *tarn-kappe* : this is made still more clear by the German traditions (Nos. 152, 153. 155), which relate, that blows with rods were aimed at the invisible dwarfs till they struck and beat off their caps, upon which they became visible, and fell into the power of man. Eske Brok accidentally hit off, in a field, a dwarf's hat ; and in order to recover it, he granted all his requests (Thiele, iii. 49). This shows the importance of the head-dress to the fairies, as it enables them to remain concealed from human eyes. Laurin has a mist-cap, like Euglin, which he throws over Siegfried, and thus hides him from the view of the giant ; Rosengarten attributes the same powers to the veil of Kriemhild. The goblin Zephyr (in the old French romance, Perceforest, Mélanges,

t. iii.) who, like the dwarfs of the Edda, is so called after a wind, wears a black cap, which enables him to render himself invisible, or to assume any other form.

Mist-caps are also assigned to fickle, roguish people, resembling the dwarfs in temper (*Man. Samml.* ii. 258<sup>b</sup>); and the popular superstition of the Romans fancied their *incubo*, which may be compared in all respects with the German Alp, in like manner, with a hat to which they attached the invisibility of the spirit. The passage is in the Satires of Petronius, c. 38 (*Burm.* p. 164): "Sed quomodo dicunt, ego nihil scio, sed audiui, quomodo incuboni pileum rapuisset et thesaurum invenit." "Incubones qui thesauris invigilant." (*Sabinus ad ii. Georg.* v. 507.) And a more recent expositor of Petronius adds, from the traditions of his day, "Ex superstitione veteri, cujus hodieque passim exstant reliquæ, velut incubones sint ornati pileis, quibus surreptis, compellantur ad obsequium in indicandis pecuniis absconditis." This wholly agrees with the words of the Nibelungen Lied:

399 *dô er die tarn-kappen sit Alberich angewan,  
dô was des hordes herre Sivrit der vrceliche man* \*.

---

\* When he had got the tarn-kappe from Elberich, then was Seigfrîd the most terrible man of the horde.

The small household gods of Phœnician and Grecian antiquity, the Pataci, Cabiri, and Tritopatores, which correspond to our fairies and dwarfs, appear with pointed caps, and have many other traits of resemblance with them, in form, dress, and skill.

## 6. HABITATION.

1. According to the Edda, the Elves of light dwell with Freir, the god of the sun; but the black ones in the ground and in stones. The current traditions all assign them an extensive kingdom in mountains, wild and inaccessible defiles, tumuli, and clefts of rocks. They have often regularly constructed abodes in them, filled with gold and silver: the Scotch Shians are represented as very splendid, resembling the Frau Venusberg (Venus's Mountain) of the German tradition (No. 170). In Sweden it is believed that they sit in small circular, hollowed stones, which are called Elfin mills (*alfquarnar*), which elf mills occur also in the Scottish traditions, and correspond with the Iceland *álfavakir*, small holes in the ice. Wolfram, in Saint William, p. 26<sup>b</sup>, says of mountains: "*daz den wilden getwergen wäre ze stigenne dà genuoc \**." Hugo von Langenstein, in the St. Martina, f. 128<sup>d</sup>:

\* That the wild dwarfs descended into them.



*sie loufent uf die berge,  
als die wilden twerge\*.*

In poems of the middle ages : Dieterich's Flucht,  
6469 :

*zwei tûsent man  
under helm unt halsbergen,  
den wilden getwergen  
vuoren sie vil nâch geliche  
mit îlen sicherliche †.*

Also, Conrad von Würzburg, Trojan War,  
6183 :

*er muoste loufen unde gân  
uf menigen hôhen bert,  
dâ weder katze noch getwert  
möhte über sin geklommen ‡.*

*Unter der Erde wohne ich, unter dem Stein habe  
ich meine Stätte* §, says the dwarf of the Edda  
(Alvismál, iii.) In the Nibelungen :

1356 *von wilden getwergen hân ich gehoeret sagen  
sie sin in holn bergen ||.*

\* They run up the mountains like the wild dwarfs.

† Two thousand men, in helm and hauberk, hastily pursued the wild dwarfs into the morasses.

‡ He was obliged to run over many a high mountain, which neither cats nor dwarfs could climb.

§ Beneath the earth I dwell ; under the stone I have my abode.

|| Of the wild dwarfs I have heard it said, that they dwell in hollow mountains.

And in Otnit, Elberich exclaims, Str. 127, "*mir dienet manec tal unde berc*" (many a vale and mountain serve me); and Str. 249. 278: "*im was kunt beidin tal unde berc*" (to him was known both hill and vale). There he possesses all the riches of the world; the treasure of the Nibelungen, consisting of gold and precious stones, which he watches, is well known. In Otnit, too, he says, Str. 138 and 525:

*ich gibe wol swem mich lustet silber oder golt  
ich mahte einen man wol rîche, dem ich wære holt\*.*

And to the emperor himself, Str. 137:

*unde hâst dû ûf der erden des landes also vil,  
sô hân ich darunder klâres goldes swaz ich wil†.*

In the Wilkina Saga, he offers to ransom himself out of the power of Dieterich by gold and silver.

2. The Nixen have under the water a country which, in German traditions (No. 52. 65) is described with as much magnificence as in the Irish, where there are splendid houses and cities, adorned with all the riches of the world. Dame Holle

\* I give to whom I list silver or gold, and make him rich to whom I am friendly.

† And if thou hast so much land on the earth, I have beneath it as much pure gold as I like.

has beneath her pond a garden abounding with the finest fruit.

3. Above ground the fairies have favourite haunts; meadows, enclosed and solitary forests, especially trees, beneath the shade of which they like to assemble. (See Thiele, iii. 18.) Thus Elberich lies on the grass, under a lime tree; among the ancient Prussians, the elder was sacred to him, and it was unlawful to damage it; and the same superstition still prevails in Denmark. (Thiele, i. 132.) It was also customary in Germany to pay a particular respect to this tree on the first of May, or about Midsummer, when the Elves of light go in procession (Prætorius Glückstopf, p. 217). In Norway it is forbidden, on their account, to cut down certain high trees. Domestic spirits are used to have particular paths. Hütchen's road was over mountains and forests, and Hütchen therefore always got the start of all others (Deut. Sag. i. p. 100). Bolieta (in French Switzerland) always followed the same steep path, which was so clean that a stone was never seen to lie on it though there is a whole bed of boulders on the mountains: it is still called Bolieta's path.

4. Men have sometimes been in the dwellings of the fairies; and their spiritual nature has then been shown by the circumstance that time ceases

with them. A girl who had passed a whole year in an Elfin mountain fancied that she had been there only three days (Hausmärchen, No. 39); and a hundred years appeared to the two Scotch musicians as but one night passed in pleasure; while a poor woman (Deutsche Sagen, No. 151) slept the whole time. Tannhäuser does not perceive how quickly the time passes in the subterraneous mountains.

### 7. LANGUAGE.

1. The Edda ascribes a peculiar language to the fairies, different from that of gods, men, and giants; the terms in which, for the principal natural phenomena, are given in the *Alvismál*. In the same manner as Homer in several places distinguishes between divine and human appellations. It is remarkable that in northern traditions the echo is called *dvergmál*, or *bergmál*; that is, "dwarf, or mountain language." (See Biörn Haldorson, i. 73<sup>1</sup>, and Färöiske Quäder. Randers, 1822, p. 464. 468.) The subterraneous beings in Wales have an entirely distinct language, of which a person, who had been among them, learned a few words.

2. The Elves speak in a very low voice. In Ruodiger's poem of the *Zwein Gesellen* (Königsberg MS. fol. 17<sup>d</sup>), a person speaks in a *low voice*,

quite in *goblin's language*. In the Isle of Man, Waldron heard a whispering, which must have proceeded from them. In Sweden, too, their voice is soft as the air. Hinzelmann (Deut. Sag. i. 104. 111. 113) had the gentle accents of a delicate boy.

3. The ugly, shrivelled Elf in the Irish legend speaks in a snarling and piercing tone, which terrifies men. As a changeling, he does not speak at all, but howls and screams in a frightful manner; and, if compelled, his voice sounds like that of a very old man.

4. Some mountain spirits cry aloud and roar. The Servian Vile is said to have the voice of a woodpecker.

### 8. FOOD.

The fairies require some delicate food: it is not till they are more intimately connected with men that they manifest a desire for more gross meats. In Ireland they sip the dew drops; otherwise sweet milk seems to be their peculiar sustenance. According to German traditions (No. 38. 45. 75. 273. 298), a bowl of it is frequently placed ready for them; and in Wales a similar custom prevails. A basin of sweet, fresh cream was every evening placed on the roof of the cowshed for a mountain spirit in French Switzerland,

and always emptied by him (Alpenrosen for 1824, p. 74). They will also eat crumbs of cheese, or white bread. In Prussia, bread and beef used formerly to be set apart for them in the night, and the doors locked, and people were happy if they found in the morning that they had partaken of them. It is expressly said (Deutsche Sag. No. 67) that for the Nixen there must be no salt mixed with the food.

Sir Walter Scott (Minstrelsy, ii. 163) observes that on the summit of Minchmuir, a mountain in Peebles-shire, there is a spring called the Cheese spring, because, formerly, every person who passed threw into it a piece of cheese, as an offering to the fairies, to whom it was dedicated. It is singular that, in the Scotch Highlands, according to Mr. Stewart (p. 136), cheese is regarded as an antidote against the influence of fairies. It must be prepared from the milk of a cow which has eaten a certain herb, called in Gaelic *mohan*, which grows on the tops or declivities of high mountains, and where no quadruped has ever been in quest of food.

#### 9. MODE OF LIFE.

1. The Elves live in large societies, sometimes independent, sometimes under a chief. In the Highlands there is nothing known of the queen,

who is however mentioned in the English and Irish legends. In Wales they have a king, who is attended by a court, as also in Sweden (*Schwedische Lieder*, iii. 158, 159), where they imitate the forms usual among men. In Iceland the relation is more organized. There, the subterranean mode of government is almost quite like the human. An Elfin king resides in Norway, whither the stattholder, with some other officers, repair every two years to make their report; upon which judgment is pronounced and executed. In German poems of the middle ages we meet with dwarf kings who are powerful, and reign over extensive kingdoms. Elberich wears a crown (*Otnit*, *Str.* iii.) and is sovereign of large subterranean dominions; he says to *Otnit* (*Str.* 173):

*ich hân eigens landes mē dan dīner dri\*.*

Thus, too, Laurin is a king, and governs many dwarfs.

2. Every where the employment and delight of the fairies consists in dancing. They pass whole nights in this amusement without being tired, and only the beams of the rising sun force them to desist and conceal themselves. The circles which they have trodden in the dewy grass are also met

\* I have land of my own more than three of you.

wish out of Scotland, in Scandinavia, and the north of Germany; and every one who beholds them exclaims, "Here the fairies have been dancing!" In the Isle of Man traces of their tiny feet were even visible in the snow. It is so enchanting, that the youth who witnesses the dance of the female fairies by moonlight cannot avert his eyes. (Danske Viser, i. 235. 237, 238.) A German tradition (No. 31) describes the marriage-feast of the subterraneous beings; Count Eulenburg dances with them; but, like the Irish dancer, is obliged to turn round so swiftly in the giddy mazes of the spirits, as almost to lose his breath. Mountain mannikins issue from their pits, and the Nixen from the deep, to take part in the dances of men, and distinguish themselves by their peculiar gracefulness and skill. (No. 39. 51. 58.) The Nixen, too, are seen dancing on the surface of the water (No. 61), and the dwarfs before the giant. (Dieterich and Hildebr. Str. 159.) Thiele relates some Danish traditions on this subject; i. 48; and ii. 32. In an Austrian popular song (Schottky, p. 102) it is said: "*und düärt drobn afm beargl, da danzn zwoa zweargl, de danzn so rar* \*."

\* And there upon the mountain there dance two little dwarfs, and they dance so rarely.



The Servian Vilen, too (who, like the female Elves, are young and beautiful, with flowing hair, dwelling on mountains and in forests), celebrate the *kolo* (circular dance) on the meadows; a song in the *Wukisch Sammlung*, vol. i. No. 75, begins with,

*O Kirschbaum, Kirschbaum,  
 heb die Aeste oben,  
 unter dir die Vilen  
 führen Zaubertänze;  
 Radischa vor ihnen  
 schwingt Thau mit der Gelsel,  
 führt zwei Vilen,  
 redet zu der dritten\*.*

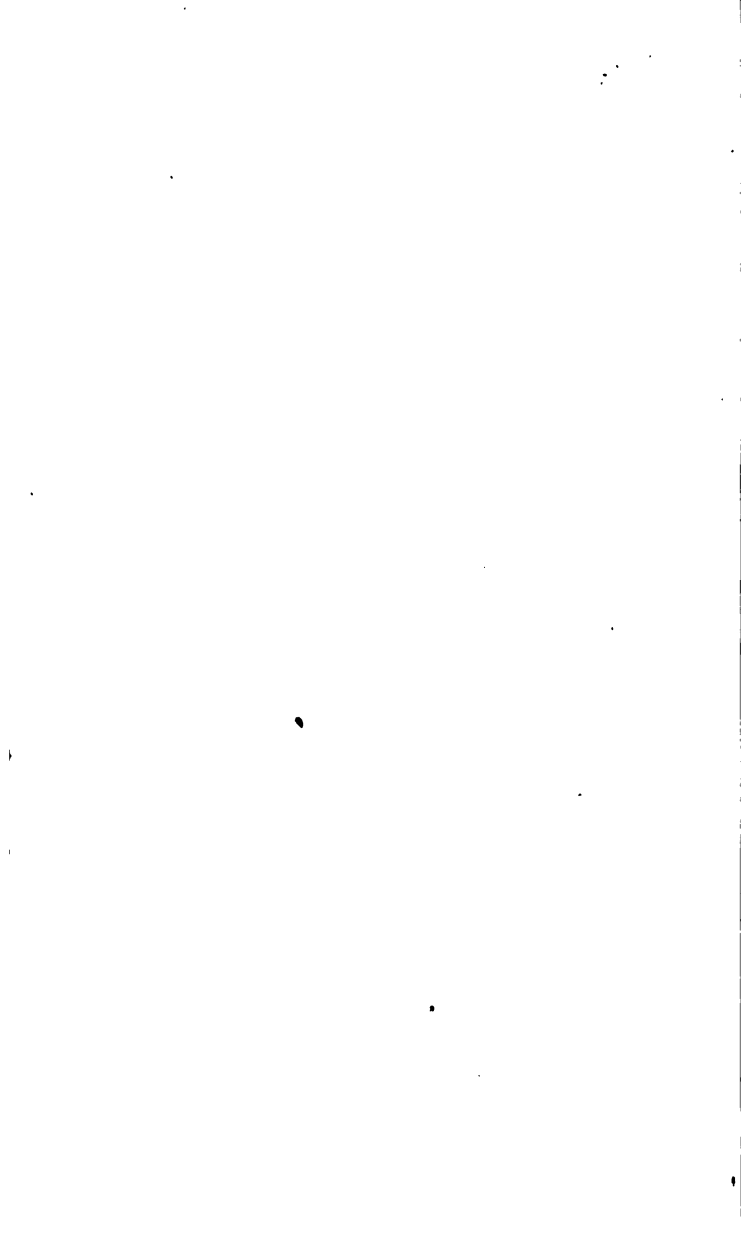
3. To their passion for dancing they add a love of music. Wherever the fairies hold a feast they are accompanied by music; nor is it wanting in their large festive processions: in this the traditions of all nations are unanimous. The water nymphs sing unknown songs (*Deut. Sag.* 306); and it is impossible to describe the magic effects

\* O cherry tree, cherry tree,  
 Lift up thy boughs,  
 Beneath thee the Vilen  
 Lead on their magic dance;  
 Radischa at their head  
 Sprinkles dew with her wand,  
 Leads on two Vilen,  
 And talks to a third.



O Cherry tree, Cherry tree.

W. H. W. 1855



(*Danske Viser*, i. 234) which the song of the female fairies produces on the whole creation ; all seem to hearken, and with motionless attention.

The testimony of a German poem of the fourteenth century (Cod. Pal. No. 341, fol. 357\*) is remarkable, where, speaking of the musicians who played a peculiarly sweet music : "*sie videlten alle den albleich*" (they all played the *albleich*).

A Scotch fairy comes to a farmer and requests him to sing an old Gaelic song, and rewards him handsomely for it. Elberich, also, has not forgotten music, as the Swedish Nix, or the *Ström-karl*, who, sitting beneath the water, plays to the dancing Elves ; or the bridegroom who, by his music, compels the Nix to restore to him his bride. (*Danske Viser*, i. 328. *Svenska Visor*, iii. 140.) He has a harp ; Otnit (*Str.* 522) :

*Er ruorte also geswinde die seiten allesamt  
in einem swezen döne, dan der sal erdöz \*.*

Of the domestic spirit Goldemar (*Meibom. Script.* i. 286) it is said : "Lusit dulcissime in instrumento musicali chordis aptato." Another sings (*Deutsche Sagen*, i. p. 113), and the Irish Cluricaune whistles at his work. In Norway the music of the sub-

\* He struck all the strings in so sweet a tone that the hall resounded.

tértraneous beings is called *Huldre slaat*, and has a hollow and monotonous sound. The mountaineers sometimes play this, and pretend that they have learned it by listening to the subterraneous spirits of the rocks, which dwell in caves. In Scotland and Ireland it is heard to issue every night from the tumuli and the shians of the fairies. A Shetlander, who had a good ear for music, learned the melody of a train which passed during the night. The people in Zealand and in the south of Sweden know an elfin king's air, which compels all who hear it, both old and young, and even inanimate objects, to begin to dance like the Irish melody of the young bagpiper; and the musician himself cannot leave off unless he knows how to play the air backwards quite correctly, or somebody behind him cuts the strings of his violin.

Like mankind, the Elves have two great festivals when the sun is at the highest and at the lowest, which they celebrate with solemn processions. On the first of May, in the morning, when the sun is approaching the summer solstice, the Irish hero O'Donoghue, under whose dominion the golden age formerly reigned upon earth, ascends with his shining Elves from the depths of the lake of Killarney; and, with the utmost gaiety and magnificence, seated on a milk-white horse,

leads the festive train along the water. His appearance announces a blessing to the land, and happy is that man who beholds him.

At Christmas, when the sun is at the lowest, the subterraneous beings celebrate their nocturnal procession with the wildest and most awe-inspiring mirth. It is the fairies in green garments who rush over forests and secluded haunts; the trampling of the horses, the loud shoutings, and the noise of the bugles, may be distinctly heard. (Waldron, p. 132.) Hence they are called "*das wüthende heer*" (the furious host), "*die wüthenden jäger*" (the furious huntsmen), and in the isle of Möen, the leader, "*Grön Jette*." (Thiele, i. 196.) The expression itself is an ancient one; for the poet Reinfried of Brunswick (f. 4<sup>b</sup>) says, "he rushes on like the furious host;" and in the before-mentioned poem of Ruodiger's (fol. 17<sup>d</sup>) a person swears "by the furious host." In the priest Konrad's poem of Roland, of the twelfth century, it is said (ver. 5736) "*der tiuvel hât üzgesant sîn geswarne unde sîn her*," (the devil has sent out his swarms and his host); and in the Saint Martina of Hugo of Langenstein (fol. 174<sup>d</sup>), "*der hellejeger mit sînen banden*" (the huntsman of hell with his band). It is as dangerous to follow, nay even to witness, this furious train, as it is considered

fortunate to behold that of O'Donoghue. Here, too, a leader goes on before, for which German traditions (No. 4. 5) place Dame Holle in her evil quality, and the Tutosel (No. 311), or else they put at the head Haackelberg (No. 248), Rodenstein (No. 169), the knight of Davensberg (Münster Sagen, 1825, p. 168, 169), and in Denmark, Waldemar, Palnatoke and Abel (Thiele, i. 52. 90. 100; ii. 63). They ride on black and hideous horses with dishevelled manes.

#### 10. SECRET POWERS AND INGENUITY.

1. The possession of the mist cap already acquaints us that the Elves can vanish and make themselves invisible at pleasure. This belief prevails every where; we will therefore merely quote some ancient testimonies. Elberich makes himself invisible to Otnit, though there is no mention of a tarn-kappe in this poem, perhaps because he wears a crown, and Otnit himself saw him merely by virtue of a ring. Nobody can take hold of him:

Str. 298, "*wie sol man gevöhen daz nieman ensthet\* ?*"

And yet he is not present as a shadow, but cor-

\* How can we perceive what no one can see?





The Cluricaune goes without any difficulty through keyholes, and rides through the air on a rush. An Elf, according to the Nornagest Saga (p. 2), penetrates through bolted doors. Alvis the dwarf, in the Edda, has wandered through all the nine worlds (Alvismál ix).

3. The Elves know the future, and also what is taking place at a distance (Deutsche Sag. No. 175). They prophesy (Thiele, iii. 63), and announce impending misfortunes: the little men of the mountains foretel death to the mountaineers by knocking three times at their door (Deut. Sag. No. 37). See the Klopfer of Hohenrechberg in Gustavus Schwabs Beschreibung der Alp, p. 227. The Water Elves, too, in the Nibelungen predict to the Burgundians their future destiny. The Servian Vile likewise informs the hero Marco of his death. The dwarf Alvis (the Allwise) in the Edda, whose very name indicates his powers, does not leave a single question of the god Thor unanswered; he has been every where, and knows every thing.

4. They can assume any form. They frequently appear of the size of men. The Nixen, which come on shore and mingle among men, resemble the most beautiful young women, and adopt their dress; only as an indication of their origin a lappet of their garments is invariably wet (Deut. Sag. No.

60). The domestic spirit, on his master's removing, flies along by the side of the carriage, in the form of a white feather (Deut. S. i. p. 105. 116); he makes his escape under the figure of a marten (p. 111), or appears as a serpent (see No. 305). The fairy queen in Tipperary scared the poor herdsman with the most terrific images.

5. They communicate supernatural knowledge and powers. Elberich presents Otnit with a stone, saying, Str. 256: "*der léret dich alle sprâchen*," (this will teach you all languages). This coincides with the promise made to the youth by the female fairies (Danske V. i. 235): "*wir wol'en dich lehren Runen schneiden, schreiben und lesen*" (we will teach thee to cut, to read and to write the Runic hand): Runcapituli, too, assigns to the dwarfs the power of carving and explaining the Runic character. A ring presented by Hütchen (Deut. S. p. 74), and which communicates the greatest learning, has the same meaning. In the poem of Dieterich and Hildebrand, Str. 54, the dwarf gives a ring, the owner of which experiences neither hunger nor thirst. The Scherfenberger in Ottokar of Horneck (chap. 573) receives another which secures to him riches.

6. The skill of the Elves is infinitely superior to any thing in the power of man. According to the Edda they even excel the gods in this respect.

They made the spear Gungner for Odin, the golden hair for Sif, and the chain of gold for Freja. The very ingenious ship Skidbladner, which may be folded up like a handkerchief, is of their workmanship; and when the gods wished to bind the wolf Fenrir, they sent a message to the black Elf, who upon this made the band Gleipner of miraculous materials. Old German and northern poems contain numerous accounts of the skill of the dwarfs in curious smith's-work; most of the celebrated arms, suits of armour, and swords, were manufactured in subterraneous forges. Wieland serves an apprenticeship with dwarfs (Wilkins Sage, chap. 20), and Elberich, though he is a king, has himself made a sword in Mount Caucasus (Otnit, Str. 122), and greaves (Str. 124); and when he is going to fetch the promised armour for the emperor, it is said:

Str. 188. *do huop sich der kleine wider in den berc,  
do nam er da der essen daz herliche were\*.*

The Wilkins Sage attributes to him the manufacture of the swords for Nagelring and Eckesar, and of the latter expressly says, that it had been made under ground (Chap. 40). The Irish Cluricaune is heard hammering; he is particularly fond

\* He went again into the mountain, and took from the forge the beautiful work.

of making shoes, but these were in ancient times made of metal (in the old northern language a shoemaker is called a *shoe-smith*); and, singularly enough, the wights in a German tradition (No. 39) manifest the same propensity; for whatever work the shoemaker has been able to cut out in the day, they finish with incredible quickness during the night. The Scotch legends contain striking instances of the dexterity of the fairies in many other things.

The female fairies are fond of sewing and spinning (Samson Fagr. Sag. p. 31; Thiele, iii. 25); and in the Danish song they offer the youth a garment bleached in the moonlight. The popular superstition in Germany considers the threads which are seen flying about in autumn to be a web made by Dwarfs and Elves (F. H. Voss, Note to Luise, iii. 17). But what the older traditions relate of Elves and Dwarfs, is ascribed, in modern nursery tales, to industrious animals, such as ants and others, in the same manner as the throng of the dwarfs has been compared to that of the ants and other insects.

## 11. CHARACTER.

The temper and disposition of the Elves display a strange combination of good and evil, duplicity and sincerity, which naturally proceeds from the

mixture of two originally opposite qualities. However decidedly they are frequently impelled in one or the other direction, showing themselves either generous and obliging, or in the highest degree malicious; they, on the whole, so strictly observe a dubious mean, that this must be stated as their natural characteristic.

I. They are fond of teasing, vexing, and mocking mankind, without intending them any real harm; and a certain good nature manifests itself with this disposition. The domestic spirit in the German tradition (No. 75) took the greatest delight in setting people quarrelling, but first removed all deadly weapons, that they might not be able to injure one another. He plagues and makes game of people wherever he can, amuses himself with a fool, and makes songs in ridicule of those who had fallen into his trap. Elberich shows the same inclination (Otnit, Str. 451):

*er wolde die heiden irren, Elberich was kluoc,  
der heiden abgöte er in die burc truoc  
dâ mits wolt' er sie effen unde triben sinen spot \*.*

He then calls to them invisibly, that he is God, and that they should worship him. Laurin, by a

\* He wished to deceive the heathens; Elberich was cunning; he carried their idols into the mountain, intending to mock and make game of them.

sudden darkness, teases those who had accompanied him into the mountain. Elberich entices the wonderful ring from Otnit, then makes himself invisible, laughs at him, and ridicules his threats, but good naturedly restores it.

The wights in the mines (Deut. Sag. No. 37) call out, and when the workmen come running up they find no one there. In Norway they carry off people's tools, and then bring them back, laughing the owners to scorn. "To laugh like a Kobold," is a proverb in Germany. In a book published in the seventeenth century (Reimedic Nordh. 1673, p. 149) we find the expression, "You laugh as if you would split your sides like a Kobold."

The fairies, however, will not suffer themselves to be joked; and fond as they are of laughing at people, they do not permit them to retaliate. The domestic spirit will not allow himself to be teased. The Elves once invited a servant girl, of whom they were very fond, to be present at a wedding: as the bridal pair came tripping along, a blade of grass lay unfortunately in their path; the bridegroom got safely over, but not so the bride; she stumbled: the girl could not suppress her laughter, and the whole scene instantly vanished (Svenska Visor, iii. 159). A servant once laughed at one of these little spirits because a single grain of wheat

was more than he could carry; quite enraged, he threw it on the ground—it was of the purest gold—but from that time he and his fellows disappeared, and the house fell into decay (Strack, *Beschr. v. Eilsen*, p. 124). The old proverb of the straw in the path (Berthold's *Sermons*, p. 194<sup>a</sup>) is illustrated by such traditions.

The fairies like above all things to tease people by pelting them invisibly with small stones. A Scotch Brownie derived its nickname from this circumstance. The mountain dwarfs in German traditions (No. 37) are fond of this jest; Elberich, too, pelts Otnit, but so that he cannot see him (Str. 162). According to the *Legenda Aurea*, cap. 177, there was a spectre in Mayence, in the year 856, who threw stones at the priests while singing mass. The *ignis fatuus* is called in Hanover the *Tückebold*, and is regarded as a malicious spirit, which, by its elfish light, entices the wanderers into bogs. (J. H. Voss, *Lyr. Ged.* ii. Anm. p. 315. See Hebel *Aleman. Ged.* 31—35).

2. But the Elves are likewise faithful, and only seem to require confidence from men. "No one shall break a solemn vow," says the dwarf, in the *Edda*. (*Alvismál*, iii.) Elberich, who, in the song of the *Nibelungen*, is entirely and sincerely devoted to Siegfried from the moment that he has vowed fidelity to him, keeps his word also to

Quit, and acquits himself as he has promised.  
He says,

Str. 136. *nū lā mich āf die triuwe mīn,*  
and Str. 137. *ez sprechent mīn genōzen, daz ich getriuwe ī \**.

On the other hand, they threaten those who do not fulfil their promise to them (Thiele, iii. 48), or even punish such (Deut. Sag. No. 29). In Iceland, it is supposed that they exercise justice and equity in all things. A person who secretly took from them a golden slipper had his whole house burnt down (Thiele, iii. 64). The fidelity of the domestic spirit, which tolerates no dishonesty, and for this reason even punishes the servants, is never impeached. The greatest attachment is evinced by the Irish Banshee, which always announces the death of a member of the family with the utmost grief; and its lament is a counterpart to the deriding laugh of other Elves.

In the Tyrol, too, they believe in a spirit which looks in at the window of the house in which a person is to die (Deutsche Sagen, No. 266); the white woman with a veil over her head (267) answers to the Banshee; but the tradition of the Klage-weib (mourning woman), in the Lüneburger Heath (Spiels Archiv. ii. 297), resembles

\* Now depend on my fidelity,  
My fellows; say that I am faithful.



it still more closely. On stormy nights, when the moon shines faintly through the fleeting clouds, she stalks, of gigantic stature, with death-like aspect, and black hollow eyes, wrapt in grave-clothes, which float in the wind, and stretches her immense arm over the solitary hut, uttering lamentable cries in the tempestuous darkness. Beneath the roof over which the Klage-weib has leaned, one of the inmates must die in the course of the month.

3. The dwarfs are every where represented as subtle and cunning ; and it is unnecessary to cite instances. Elberich, also, is cunning (*ist khuc*, Str. 451), and knows how to make himself master of every thing by ingenious stratagems ; the ring, as well as the ships which he steals from the heathen ; and we must view it in this light, when the Elves are praised as thieves. They exert all their dexterity, like the Scotch Elves, in causing whirlwinds, or even conflagrations, to have an opportunity to steal. It is remarkable that in the Wilkina Sage (chap. xvi.) Elberich is styled the great thief (*hinn mikli stelari*). Respecting the thefts of the dwarfs we may refer to other German traditions (No. 152, 153. 155). For the most part they take provisions. A Danish Trolde stole some beer, and on being surprised, escaped, but left his copper kettle behind (Thiele, i. 35).

The Shetland fairy, who had invisibly milked the cow, forgot a curious and beautiful vessel in her flight.

The Tom Thumb of the German and English tales, who is nothing more than an active little Elf, has not forgotten his propensity for thieving; while playing with his companions, he steals their things out of the bag, and throws the money out of the king's treasury (Hausm. No. 37 and 45. See iii. p. 401). A thief celebrated by the high German poets of the thirteenth century, who was skilled in removing the eggs from under the bird (a tradition which still survives in the nursery tales, No. 129), was so different from a common robber, that he assisted Charlemagne in a theft commanded by an angel; and may, we think, without being too far-fetched, be referred to this class, as originally an Elf; partly on account of his character, which is that of a faithful domestic spirit attending his master, and partly on account of his name, Elbegast (Vide Museum für Alt Deutsche Litteratur, ii. 234, 235).

## 12. CONNEXION WITH MANKIND.

1. The subterraneous spirits love a retired and solitary life; they cannot endure noise and bustle; and in reference to this circumstance, are called the still (good) people. "At home tranquillity is

not to be disturbed," says a dwarf, in the *Edda*. (*Alvismál*, i.) In the daytime they keep themselves quiet: it is not till the night, when ~~men~~ are asleep, that they become lively and active. They do not like that any human eye should see them: if they celebrate a feast, or solemnise a marriage, they, perhaps, permit the master of the house to look on (*Deut. Sag. No. 31*); but if any other eye inquisitively peeps, even through the smallest hole, they instantly vanish, and their pleasure is interrupted. In Tipperary they retire if men approach their old dancing grounds; and the lowing of the cattle is to them quite insupportable. If a priest comes towards them (see tale of the Priest's Supper) they quickly hide themselves. The dwarfs in the *Erzgebirge* were driven away by the erection of the forges and stamping mills (*Deut. S. No. 36*), and others by the ringing of the bells of churches built in the neighbourhood. A farmer felling trees and squaring timber in the forest vexed the mountain spirit, which asked, in a lamentable tone, "Who is making so much noise here?" "A Christian," replied his fellow, "has come here, and hews down the wood of our favourite haunts, and does us much injury." (*Danske Viser*, i. 175, 176, 178.) Thiele (*Danske Folkesagn*, i. 42, 43, 122, 174, 175) has collected similar traditions, according to which the Trolles

leave the country on the ringing of bells, and in some places remain away. A passage in the Anglo-Saxon poem of *Beowulf* shows the high antiquity of this tradition: the king had built a castle near the dwelling of the spirit Grendel; the heroes were rejoicing in it, but (p. 9),

*se ellengäst earfodlice  
 thrage getholode, se the in thystrum bād,  
 thāt he dāgora gehwam drcām gehyrde  
 hlūdne in healle; thār wās hearpan swég  
 swutel sang scōpes.*

(The mighty spirit, which dwelt in darkness, was much grieved to hear every day the loud tumult in the hall—the minstrel's harp, and the poet's song.) Grendel tried every thing in his power to affright the people: at midnight, he and his mother slipt into the castle, where they murdered and plundered the sleeping inmates; so that every thing soon became desolate. Chaucer immediately, in his introduction to the wife of Bath's tale, 6446, describes the expulsion of the Elves in the following manner:

but now can no man see non Elves mo;  
 for now the grete charitee and prayeres  
 of limytours and other holy fares,  
 that serchen every land and every streame,  
 as thicke as motes in the sonne beme,  
 blissing halles, chambres, kichenes and boures,  
 ciites and burghes, castles high and towers,

thorpes and bornes, shepenes and dairies;  
this maketh that ther ben no fairies.

For ther as wont to walken was an Elf  
ther walketh now the limitour himself  
in undermeles and in morweninges,  
and sayth his matines and his holy thinges  
as he goth in his limitatioun.

Women may now go safely up and down  
in every bush, and under every tree;  
ther is non other incubus but he,  
and he ne will don hem no dishonour.

2. They are also called, as in Scotland, the *good people, good neighbours, men of peace*; in Wales (*Fairy Tales*, p. 134) *the family, the blessing of their mothers, the dear wives*; in the old Norse, and, to this day, in the Faroe islands, *huldufolk*; in Norway, *huldre*; and, in conformity with these denominations, manifest a disposition quite the reverse of the preceding, to be near mankind, and to be on good terms with them. They take up their abodes near those of men, even, as in Scotland, beneath the threshold, and a mutual intercourse takes place. The dwarfs in the city of Aix-la-Chapelle have borrowed pots and kettles, and various kitchen utensils, from the inhabitants, and faithfully restored them (*Deut. Sag.* No. 33. See Thiele, i. 121); while, at Quedlinburg, they have even lent their own tin goods to people at their marriage feasts (No. 36. Vide Thiele, ii. 15). The most intimate con-

nexion is expressed in a legend, according to which, the family of the Elves conformed in every respect to the manners of the family to which it belonged, and of which it was a copy. The domestic Elves celebrated their marriages on the same day as the people; their children were born on the same day; and they mourned their dead on the same day (Deut. Sag. No. 42). These *good people* are ready to assist in sorrow and trouble, and show themselves grateful for any favours they have received (Deut. Sag. No. 30. 32. 45. Thiele, i. 72). The Elves sometimes make presents of singular and magic things, which ensure good fortune as long as they are preserved (Deut. Sag. No. 35. 41. 70). In Wales, if no obstacle is opposed to their leaving the houses, and a dish of milk is set for them, they leave a small present behind. The Scotch Elf who, in the sequel, saved his master's life, testified his gratitude to him for having made the desired improvement in his subterraneous abode. In Switzerland the dwarfs have often left their mountains in the night, and have done all the hard work, cut the corn, &c.; so that when the country people came in the morning with their waggons they found every thing quite ready for them. Or they have plucked the cherries, and carried them directly to the place where they were generally preserved (Deut. Sag. No. 149). A

good-natured dwarf laid bundles of healing herbs for wounded workmen, which he had prepared in the night (Krieger, *der Bodenthäler*. Halberst. 1819. p. 41). Napfhans led the cows to pasture in the most dangerous situations, without a single one having ever received any injury.

People, however, must preserve silence respecting their favours, and not communicate the secret. In consequence of its having gone abroad, the Scotch peasant lost the wonderful grain to which there was no end; and the pitcher which continually filled itself, and was given by the Elves to a boy, became empty (Deut. Sag. No. 7). Ashes having been strewn to discover the traces of the Swiss dwarfs, they vanished, and from thenceforth withheld their assistance.

3. The Elves also lay claim to the good offices of men. Two musicians were obliged to play in a Scotch shian for a hundred years. But the most frequent instances are of their fetching midwives into their mountains, or under the water, and demanding their assistance (Deut. Sag. No. 41. 49. 304. Thiele, i. 36). A fairy enticed Rolf into her cave that he might lay hands on her daughter who was ill, and could not recover except by the human touch. Rolf performed this service, and was presented with a ring (*Gänge Rolfs Saga*, p. 63, 64).

4. Not only the Scotch traditions, but also Danish songs, speak, at times, of more intimate connexions between mankind and the fairies. Rosmer the waterman stole a wife from the earth; Agnes lived eight years in the deep with a water spirit, and had eight children (See Thiele, i. 114. Schwedische Volkslieder, i. 1. ii. 22); and also another one, who danced into the waves with the daughter of Marstig (Danske Viser, i. 311. See Schwed. Volksl. iii. 129), a tradition which is related pretty much in the same manner in Germany (No. 51). In Iceland it is believed that these connexions always have a melancholy end, even if they should seem to be happy at first. The connexion of Staufenberg with the water Nixe brings, at last, destruction. Elberich himself gained Otnit's mother invisibly on May-day (Str. 181); and Signild shares the throne with the dwarf Laurin in the subterranean kingdom.

5. If an Elf attaches himself to an individual, or a family, and devotes himself to their service, he is called *Kobold* (goblin), *Brownie* (in Scotland), *Cluricaune* (in Ireland), the old man in the house *Tomte gubbe* (in Sweden), *Nisse-god-dreng* (in Denmark and Norway), *Duende*, *Trasgo* (in Spain), *Lutin*, *Goblin* (in France), *Hobgoblin* (in England); perhaps, too, he receives a nickname, as a Napfhans (*Jean de la Bolièta*) in French Switzer-



land (Alpenrosen for 1824, p. 74. 75); and, in German traditions, we meet with a Flodecken, Hinzelmann, Ekerken (squirrel), Kurd Chüngen (i. e. little Joachim; see the tradition relating to him in Kantzow's Pomerania, i. 333. See Brem. Dictionar. v. 379), Irreganc, Girregar (Königsberg MS. f. 18<sup>1</sup>, 19<sup>a</sup>), Knocker, Boot (No. 71—78), Puck (northern Pûki), Man Ruprecht, King Goldemar\*. Henceforth he does not forsake his master; evinces the greatest attachment towards him; and promotes his interest as much as he can: it is only under certain circumstances that he leaves him; otherwise he continues as long as his master, or a member of the family, is alive. But, on the other hand, his master cannot get rid of him: if he removes to another place his spirit follows him. Hinzelmann flew along by the side of his master in the form of a feather; others creep into a cask, and, on departing, look out of the bung-hole; others sit up behind on the waggon (Deut. Sag.

\* *Goblinus Persona*, who flourished towards the end of the thirteenth, and beginning of the fourteenth century, relates of King Goldemar, a domestic spirit, who lived for three years with a Neveling of Hardenberg, that he showed all the character of such, and is probably the same Goldemar who is mentioned by Reinfried of Brunswick, f. 194<sup>a</sup>, where he is called "*daz riche keiserliche getwer*" (the rich, imperial dwarf); and also in the Appendix to the Heldenbuch. (See Alt-Deutsche Wälder, i. 297, 298.)

No. 72. 44. See note to the Irish legend of the Haunted Cellar). They usually live below, in the cellar, and near the kitchen. The Irish Cluicaine searches all the wine cellars,

The domestic spirit retains the character of the Elves: he is active, roguish, good-natured, and only when irritated very revengeful (See No. 74. 973, Thiele, iii. 8. 61); admirably skilful and unwearied in all labours, inexhaustible in secret and supernatural powers; "*er dienete im sò sîn knecht, allerhande dinge was er im gereht,*" (he served him like a servant in all kind of things whatever he told him), is conformably with this, said of Elberich in the Nibelungen Lied (v. 405); and though a king, he rendered every service to Otnit. Only the domestic spirit seems to have fallen some steps lower, and to experience more human wants. He every where manifests an evident desire for food and clothing. The food must always be placed in the same spot, otherwise he is exceedingly angry. (Deut. Sag. No. 73, and note to the Irish legend of the Haunted Cellar; Dänische Sage Thiele, i. 135): he seems to serve for clothing. He sometimes vanishes on receiving it, which is related both in a Scotch and Dutch tradition (Ol Wormli, epist. ii. 669), and a German tradition (No. 39. i.), but most distinctly in the Mecklenburg legend (Hederich's Schwerin. Chronik.) of Puck,

who bargains for a variegated coat with bells, before he enters into service, and which he receives on his departure. When he leaves the house, he generally makes some presents of things endowed with miraculous powers, which must be preserved in the family, otherwise it will fall into decay.

Prosperity reigns in the house which possesses an Elf; the cattle thrive better than in other places, and are not seized with diseases, and every undertaking succeeds. In the night, when the spirit is the most active, he, as we have already said, does not like to be overlooked and watched; if he chances to be on good terms with the servants, he performs the most laborious part of their work for them; fetches water, hews wood, curries and takes care of the horses, of which he sometimes appears to be particularly fond. (Thiele, ii. 4). The whole house is every morning found perfectly clean and in order, every thing in its place. At the same time he is strict, abhors idleness and dishonesty, reports offences, and punishes the careless domestics, as Hinzelmänn makes use of his stick, and the Brownie punishes the lazy groom with his whip. In Denmark it is even supposed (Thiele, i. 135) that a spirit dwells in the church, where he maintains order, and punishes in case of notorious occurrences.

There is an ancient testimony of the domestic

spirit in Gervase of Tilbury, which is the more remarkable as it describes him as accurately as he is represented in the traditions current at this day. (*Otia Imperialia*, p. 180).

“ Ecce enim in Anglia dæmones quosdam habent, dæmones, inquam, nescio dixerim, an secretæ et ignotæ generationis effigies, quos Galli Neptunos, Angli Portunos nominant. Istis insitum est quod simplicitatem fortunatorum colonorum amplectuntur, et cum nocturnas propter domesticas operas agunt vigilias, subito clausis januis ad ignem calefiunt et ranunculas ex sinu projectas prunis impositas comedunt, senili vultu, facie corrugata, statura pusilli, dimidium pollicis non habentes. Panniculis consertis induuntur et si quid gestandum in domo fuerit aut onerosi operis agendum, ad operandum se jungunt, citius humana facilitate expediunt. Id illis insitum est, ut obsequi possint et obesse non possint. Verum unicum quasi modulum nocendi habent. Cum enim inter ambiguas noctis tenebras Angli solitarii quandoque equitant, Portunus nonnunquam invisus, equitanti se copulat et cum diutius comitatur euntem, tandem loris acceptis equum in lutum ad manum ducit, in quo dum infixus volutatur, Portunus exiens cachinnum facit, et sic hujuscemodi ludibrio humanam simplicitatem deridet.”

## 13. HOSTILE DISPOSITION.

The Elves, with all their fondness for teasing, show themselves to be well-disposed beings, and friendly towards men; and though sometimes retreating into seclusion, yet upon the whole inclined to maintain an intercourse with them. Perfectly opposed to this is another trait, with which the traditions of all nations likewise abound, and which manifests the most hostile disposition in the fairies towards men.

1. It is believed in Wales that their very look is deadly, or at least exceedingly dangerous. According to Thomas Bourke's confession in the Irish Legends, sickness, violent fever, and loss of reason, is the consequence. A youth once saw a brown dwarf; he was seized with a tedious illness, and died in the course of the year (*Lady of the Lake*, p. 386). Every where it is recommended to withdraw, and not look up, when the nocturnal procession of the fairies is passing by. Whoever looks at the Elves through a knot-hole loses the use of that eye. A woman, on relating what she had seen in the mountain among the subterraneous spirits, became blind (*Thiele*, i. 36).

2. They have a weapon, an arrow, which infallibly kills both man and beast—even the bare touch suffices. (See the Scotch traditions). The

Elfin nymphs threaten Olof with illness, and give him a blow between his shoulders, and the next morning he is lying dead on his bier (*Danske Viser*, i. 238. *Schwed. Lieder*, iii. 163). The Ser-  
vian *Vile* shoots deadly arrows at men. A youth in the Isle of Man withdrew from the caresses of a Nixe, who, quite enraged, threw something after him; though he felt himself but slightly touched by a pebble, he experienced from that moment a fearful dread, and died in seven days after. Elberich still exercises the accustomed vengeance: when Othit touches him, and intends carrying him off, it is said (*Str.* 108), "*im wart suo dem herzen ein grösser elac getân*" (a violent blow was aimed at his heart), and the heathen king becomes raving mad in consequence of the severe blow which he receives from the invisible spirit (*Str.* 299). We may be allowed to conjecture, that in the *Nibelungen Lied*, Elberich carries the unusual sevenfold scourge with the heavy knots (buttons) (v. 1991), to give the elfin blow.

The very breath of the Elves bears contagion with it. In Ireland and Scotland, boils and sickness are caused by it. In Norway the disease is called *elv-gust*, or *elvidd* (elfin fire); in Old Norse, *álfabrúni*; and only attacks men if they come to the place where an Elf has been spitting. The Scotch fairy spits into the eye which had re-

cognised him ; the Prussian Elf breathes on it, and it becomes blind ; the Danish plucks it out (*vide Nyerups Abhandlung*) in the same manner the one mentioned by Gervase, in the passage quoted hereafter, presses it out with his finger.

3. Whoever partakes in the slightest degree of food presented by the Elves, is then, according to Scotch legends, entirely in their power, and cannot return to the society of men. For this reason they carry golden goblets in their hand, out of which they offer drink (*Thiele*, i. 23. 55 ; ii. 67 ; iii. 44. *Schwedische Volkslieder*, i. 111) ; what was spilt on the horse out of the Oldenburg horn singed its hair. (See *Thiele*, i. 4. 49.) According to the German tradition (No. 68) the woman of *Alvensleben*, among the dwarfs in the mountain, does not partake of the meat and drink presented to her, and therefore returns home ; others forfeit their freedom at the first draught (No. 305 ; *vide Thiele*, i. 119). The elfin nymphs try all their arts to induce the beautiful youth to speak (*Danske Viser*, i. 234 ; *vide Deutsche Sagen*, No. 7), or to join in their dance ; then he is theirs. Whoever has performed any service for them, and takes a little more of the proffered gold than he has a right to, puts his life in danger, or must remain with them (*Deut. Sag.* 41. 65). It is rarely that any one returns from them ; and if he does, he is

for ever (according to the Norwegian belief) either insane or idiotic (*elbisch*). Sometimes, after a long death-like sleep, he recovers his senses (Thiele, *Dän. Sag.* i. 119). Hence it is supposed of a simple person, that he is connected with subterraneous beings; and when they appear in the night he jumps up and accompanies them; and, according to a Shetland legend, shows himself familiar with the movements of their dance.

4. The Elves are fond of healthy infants, beautiful youths, and lovely women, whom they take either by force or stratagem. Invisible hands rob the mother of her child (*Waldron*, p. 128); Nixen draw it under the water (*Deut. Sag.* No. 4. 61); or they endeavour to entice men by music and dancing, by promises of miraculous presents, or a blissful life; of this the Scotch and Danish traditions (Thiele, i. 58) contain numerous examples. The Servian Vile, too, seize upon children. Almost in the same manner as Homer relates of the spirits, that they eagerly sucked blood to imbibe a sensation of life; these beings seem to renovate or replace their circle by their youthful prey, which is in fact a popular superstition in Wales.

Their most frequent depredations are effected by changing. It is several times related in German traditions (No. 11. 135), that they have substituted for a beautiful woman, during childhood,



the ugly daughter of a witch (v. Thiele, i. 89). The Scotch legend says expressly, that they are taken to nurse the children of the fairies. Generally, however, a rosy new-born infant is taken from its cradle and replaced by a changeling. The Scotch and Irish superstition has been so fully detailed, that we need only notice the great coincidence of the German (No. 81, 82. 87—90) and northern traditions (Thiele, i. 47; ii. 1). The antiquity of it is shown by a passage in Gervase of Tilbury, which is important both on account of its contents and its similarity, which we have already noticed, to a still current Scotch tale. *Otia Imper.* 987.

“Sed et dracos vulgo asserunt formam hominis assumere primosque in forum publicum adventare, sine cujusvis agitatione. Hos perhibent in cavernis fluviorum mansionem habere et nunc in specie annulorum aureorum supernatantium aut scyphorum mulieres allicere ac pueros in ripis fluminum balneantes. Nam dum visa cupiunt consequi, subito raptu coguntur ad intima delabi, nec plus hoc contingere dicunt quam foeminis lactantibus, quas draci rapiunt, ut prolem suam infelicem nutrant et nonnunquam post exactum septennium remuneratæ ad hoc nostrum redeunt hemispherium; quæ etiam narrant, se in amplis palatiis cum dracis et eorum uxoribus in cavernis et ripis fluminum ha-

bitasse. Vidimus equidem hujuscemodi feminam raptam, dum in ripa fluminis Rhodani panniculos abluerët, scypho ligneo superenatantë, quem dum ad comprehendendum sequeretur, ad altiora prægressa a draco introfertur, nutrixque facta filii sui sub aqua, illæsa rediit, a viro et amicis vix agnita post septennium. Narrabat æque miranda, quod hominibus raptis draci vescebantur, et se in humanas species transformabant, cumque uno aliquo die pastillum anguillarem pro parte dracus nutrici dedisset, ipsa digitos pastilli adipe linitos ad oculum unum et unam faciem casu ducens, meruit limpidissimum sub aqua ac subtilissimum habere intuitum. Completo ergo suæ vicis anno tertio cum ad propria rediisset in foro Pellicadii (al Belliquadri h. e. Beaucaire) summo mane dracum obvium habuit, quem agnitum salutavit, de statu domine ac alumni sui quæstionem faciens. Ad hæc dracus, heus, inquit, quonam oculo mei cepisti agnitionem? at illa oculum visionis indicat, quem adipe pastilli pridem perunxerat, quo comperto dracus digitum oculo infixit sicque de cætero non visus aut cognoscibilis divertit."

As the presence of the domestic spirit causes happiness and prosperity, so that of the changeling brings with it destruction to man and beast, and every enterprise proves abortive.

6. The dead belong to the fairies, and they

therefore celebrate the death of a person like a festival, with music and dancing. This Irish superstition agrees with the German tradition (No. 61), according to which the Nixen are seen dancing on the waters before a child is drowned. Persons long since dead are observed in the procession of the furious host (Eyring Sprichwörter, i. 781—786). In an old German poem, *Liedersal*, ii. 284: “*Der tót hæt uns daz leben in diser wilde überrant und hæt uns den trutten gesant.*” (Death has overtaken our lives in this world, and has sent us to the intervening state.)

6. Already in the poets of the middle ages the *Alp* is a malignant spirit, an evil spectre (*getwås*), oppressing men during sleep, and haunting them in their dreams. The passages are before quoted in the first division. Hence the common expression *triegen* (to deceive); as for the spirit itself, *getruc*, (phantasma), already in O. iii. 8. 48. we find *gidrog*; the adj. *elbisch*, indicates not only the nature of the *Alp*, but also that of the person possessed of the *Alp*; hence, still in the *Vocabul.* 1482, *elbischer*, phantastical. In a fable of the fifteenth century, *der elbische mülesel* (the elvish mule). (*Büschings wöchentl. Nachr.* i, 59.) In Switzerland, *älbsch*, *älb*, signifies stupid (*Stalder*, i. 94). In Swabia, *elpendrötsch* is a nickname for a stupidified person (*Nicolais Reisen*, ix. 160); and

in Mecklenburg, *alpklas*. In Hamburg, an invalid, who looks like a ghost or spectre, is called *elvenribbe* (Richey Hamb. Idiot). In the Dutch, *aelwittig*, signifies foolish, silly (*albern*). Older Dutch poets express the same notion. See Maerlant Spec. Hist. i. 5, *elfs ghedroch* (elvish illusion). An ancient testimony for this superstition is found in Snorres Heimskringla (i. p. 20): the Swedish king, Vanland, complains that the *Mara* has oppressed him in his sleep (*at mara trad hann*); and the Skalde Thiodolf repeats it in a poem (*mara qualdi*). Another is found in Gervase of Tilbury (Otia Imper. c. 86): *ut autem moribus et auribus hominum satisfaciamus, constituamus, hoc esse foeminarum ac virorum quorundam infortunia, quod de nocte celerrimo volatu regiones transcurrunt domos intrant, dormientes opprimunt, ingerunt somnia gravia, quibus planctus excitant.*

That they are not Elves, but the spirits of real men, which press others during their sleep, is agreeable to the superstition still prevailing in Sweden. (Westerdahl Beskrifning am svenska Seder, p. 40) and Denmark (Thiele, ii. 18); and, according to which, young women are unawares seized with it in their sleep, and torment other persons during the night. The name is *Mare*, in the Faroe islands *Marra*; in England *Nightmare*; and in Holland *Nachtmaer*. In Germany,

and as it seems alone, *der Alp* (mas.) is, indeed, used ; but the synonymous terms, *Mahr* and *Drud*, are employed both as masculine and feminine ; and so far it agrees with Gervase, who speaks both of men and women. The belief and legends (every thing now current in Germany is collected in No. 80) seem to be every where nearly the same. It is singular that people, by a simple act of volition, can, out of anger or hatred, send the Alp to others ; then it creeps in the form of a little white butterfly from between the eyebrows, flies away, and settles on the breast of the sleeping person. In perfect conformity with this belief, *Toggeli* (i. e. Töcklin, or Schretlin) signifies in Switzerland, according to Stalder, both Alp and butterfly ; and in the trials of witches, the evil spirit (the Elbe) is mentioned under the name of *Molkendieb* (stealer of milk) and butterfly. In France they have the *Cauchemar*. The Irish Phooka, in its nature, perfectly resembles the *Mahr* ; and we have only to observe, that there is a particular German tradition (No. 79. vide 272) of a spirit, which sits among reeds and alder-bushes ; and which, like the Phooka, leaps upon the back of those who pass by in the night, and does not leave them till they faint and fall to the earth.

## 14. ANCIENT TESTIMONIES.

The high antiquity of the belief in the existence of fairies appears from the earlier use of various denominations to which we have referred in their proper places. But there is no want of hitherto unexplored testimonies, which relate to the contents of the traditions themselves, and are of greater importance, inasmuch as their evidence is more striking. They might, indeed, have been also introduced; but partly it appeared more advantageous to review them in succession, and partly it was hardly possible fully to explain them, except in this place, particularly after we had considered the nature of the domestic spirit.

1. Cassianus (a clergyman of Marseilles in the fifth century) *collationes patrum*, vii. c. 32.

“Nonnullos (immundos spiritus), quos faunes vulgus appellat, ita seductores et joculariores esse manifestum est, ut certa quæque loca seu vias jugiter obsidentes nequaquam tormentis eorum, quos prætereuntes potuerint decipere, delectentur, sed derisu tantummodo et illusionem contenti fatigare eos potius studeant, quam nocere; quosdam solummodo innocuis incubationibus hominum pernoctare.”

He describes those little beings which the people call forest spirits, which delight in gambols, and

entice men. They have their favourite haunts; do not wish to hurt passengers, but merely to teaze and laugh at them, as the Elves are accustomed to do. Lastly, he mentions the Alp, which presses and weighs upon men in the night.

2. Isidorus hispal. (beginning of the seventh century.) Etym. lib. viii. c. ult.

“Pilosī, qui græce panitæ, latine incubi appellantur; hos dæmones Galli Duscios nuncupant. Quem autem vulgo Incubonem vocant hunc Romani Faunum dicunt.”

The Pilosī are the hairy, terrestrial Elves; the Scotch Brownie is still shaggy; and in Wolf-dieterich the *rauche Els* is expressly represented.

The Gallic name, Dusii, is met with two centuries before, in Saint Augustin de civ. Dei, c. 23, dæmones, quos Duscios Galli nuncupant; from whom Isidor, perhaps, copied this remark, as Hincmar, subsequently from one of them, in his de divortio Lotharii, p. 654, and Gervase, i. 989. They say that women had entered into a familiar intercourse with these spirits. The explanation of *Incubo* by *Faunus*, which is likewise taken from Augustine, shows how we must understand Faunus in the passage in Cassian: Vide incubo in preceding quotation from Petronius.

3. A passage in Diicange (v. aquaticus) from the Cod. Reg. 5600, written about the year 800:

“Sunt aliqui rustici homines, qui credunt aliquas mulieres, quod vulgum dicitur, strias esse debeant et ad infantes vel pecora nocere possint, vel dusiolus vel aquaticus vel geniscus esse debeat.”

The Dusii, therefore, are conceived to be little spirits; and it is proved by the contrast with the others mentioned, that they are wood or domestic spirits; for we are, no doubt, to understand by *aquaticus* a Nix, but by *geniscus* (from *genius*, Alp) a real Elf, or spirit of light: both words contain literal translations. (Hincmarus remensis, opp. Paris, 1645. T. i. p. 654, calls *lamiae*, sive *geniciales feminae*.) They injure children by substituting changelings in their room; and the Scotch tradition expressly says that they do the same with animals.

4. Monachus Sangallens (died 885) de Carolo. M. (Bouquet, v. p. 116):

“Dæmon, qui dicitur larva, cui curæ est ludicris hominum illusionibus vacare, fecit consuetudinem ad cujusdam fabri ferrarii domum (in Francia quæ dicitur antiqua) venire per noctes malleis et incudibus ludere. Cumque pater ille familias signo salutiferæ crucis se suaque munire conaretur, respondit pilosus: ‘mi compater, si non impedieris me in officina tua joculari, appone hic pontiunculam tuam et quotidie plenam invenies illam.’ Tum miser ille plus penuriam metuens corporalem,



quam æternam animæ perditionem; fecit juxta suasionem adversarii. Qui adsumpto prægrandi flascone cellarium bromii vel ditis illius, irrumpens, rapina perpetrata, reliqua in pavementum fluere permisit. Cumque jam tali modo plurimæ cubæ exinanitæ fuissent animadvertens episcopus quia dæmonum fraude periissent, benedicta aqua cellam adpersit et invecro crucis signaculo tutavit. Nocte autem facta furis antiqui callidus satellites cum vasculo suo venit et cum vinaria vasa propter impressionem sanctæ crucis non auderet attingere, nec tamen ei liceret exire, in humana specie repertus et a custode domus alligatus, pro fure ad supplicium productus et ad palum cæsus, inter cædendum hoc solum proclamavit: 'væ mihi! væ mihi! quia potiunculam compatris mei perdidit!'

The domestic spirit is evidently described here; and the whole story, which may well be a thousand years old, is so exactly in the spirit of those now current, that we might believe it was taken from them. He is called *larva*, that is, *wicht*, *schrat*, as the above-quoted old glosses translate it; as in Isidor: *Pilosus*; like the wight, he appears in the human figure. He comes in the night, plays with the smith's tools, in the same manner as the Cluricaune hammers, and like the subterraneous beings is heard at work. An attachment follows this; and he makes a present of a

pitcher of wine which is never empty, in order to promote the interest of the house, in the same manner as the Kobold. He makes no conscience of stealing the wine elsewhere ; as the Irish Cluricaune goes by night into the well-stored cellar, and, in order to exercise justice according to his notions, lets the wine run out of the casks to punish the covetous.

5. Odericus Vidalis (born in England in 1075 ; lived in Normandy). Hist. Eccl. v. p. 556.

“ Deinde Taurinus fanum Dianæ intravit Zabulonque coram populo visibilem adstare coegit, quo viso ethnica plebs valde timuit. Nam manifeste apparuit eis Æthiops niger et fuligo, barbam habens prolixam, et scintillas igneas ex ore mittens. Deinde angelus Dei splendidus ut sol advenit cunctisque cernentibus ligatis a dorso manibus dæmonem adduxit. Dæmon adhuc in eadem urbe degit et in variis frequenter formis apparens, neminem lædit. Hunc vulgus Gobelinum appellat, et per merita S. Taurini ab humana læsione coercitum usque hoc affirmat.”

6. Pœnitentiale, in a Vienna MS. of the twelfth century (Cod. Univ. 633). The composition is probably older.

Fol. 12. “ Fecisti pueriles arcus parvulos et puerorum sutularia, et projecisti eos in cellarium, sive in horreum ut satyri vel pilosi cum eis ibi

jocarentur et tibi aliorum bona comportarent, et inde ditior fieres."

As the domestic wights are little; children's toys are placed for them in the cellar or barn, their usual haunts: a bow, in order that they may discharge little arrows at men, and tease them, as they otherwise do with small pebbles; for the dangerous Elf-bolt of the Scotch tradition hath doubtless its counterpart in one that is harmless. A pair of child's shoes, which are the *Sutularia*; (Notker, Capella, 16. 37. *suftelâre*, *petasus*, *subtalare*, what is tied under the foot. They were worn only in the night, and in summer. See Dü Cange); for the wights love articles of dress above all things. The master of the house does this, that the sly Kobold may secretly steal something (generally provisions) from others, and bring it to him, for wherever he takes up his abode there is abundance of every thing.

7. Radevicus (in the twelfth century) De Gestis Frid. i. l. ii. c. 13, mentions the omens which preceded the burning of the church at Freisingen, among others:

"Pilosî, quos Satyros vocant, in domibus ple-  
rumque auditi."

The Kobold is heard knocking in the houses as a warning, in the same manner as the wights announce a death to the mountaineer (Deut. Sag.

No. 47); and as the Domestic Spirits presage an impending evil.

8. Here we must place the passages quoted in the preceding sections, from Gervase of Tilbury, whose *Otia Imperialia* was written in the thirteenth century; in which the belief in the existence of the Brownie, Changeling, and Nightmare, is related in perfect conformity with existing traditions.

9. In conclusion, we quote a legend of the Domestic Spirit, which is in a Heidelberg Codex (No. 341. f. 371, 372), and the contents, perfectly agreeing with the still current traditions, are as remarkable as the manner in which it is told is agreeable. The MS. is of the fourteenth century, the poem in all probability still older, and composed in the thirteenth century. Respecting the source of this tale, it seems most natural to assume, that a German had heard the tale in the North, or that a travelling Norwegian related it in Germany.

The king of Norway wishes to make the king of Denmark a present of a tame white bear. The Norseman who conducts him thither stops in a village on the road, and begs a lodging for the night of a Dane. He does not refuse him, but complains to the stranger that he is not master of his house, because a spirit torments him in it;

*mit niht\* ich daz eroarn kan  
 swaz creatiuren ez si.  
 sîn hant ist swâr\* alsam ein blî :  
 wen ez erreicht mit dem slage—  
 ez slât in, daz er vellet nider.  
 sîn gestalt unt sîniu gelider  
 diu moht ich leider nie gesehen,  
 wan daz ich des vûrwâr muoz jehen  
 unde sage ez in ze wunder,  
 daz ich gevriesch nie kunder  
 sô stark noch sô gelenke :  
 tische, stuele unde benke  
 die sint im ringe alsam ein bal ;  
 ez wirfet ûf unde ze tal  
 die schüzzeln unde die töpfe gar,  
 ez rumpelt stäte vûr sich dar,  
 ovenbrete unt ovensteine,  
 körbe, kisten algemeine,  
 die wirfet ez hin unde her.  
 ez gêt ot allez daz entwer  
 waz ist in dem hove mîn\*.*

Upon this, he had quitted the house with all his servants, choosing rather to build a hut in the

\* I cannot by any means discover what kind of creature it is. Its hand is as heavy as lead ; whoever it reaches with its blow, it strikes so hard that he falls to the ground. Its form and its limbs I have unfortunately never seen. I must tell you for truth that I never knew a spirit so strong or so nimble ; tables, chairs, and benches it tosses like a ball ; it throws about all the dishes and pots ; it rattles every thing before it, oven stones and boards, baskets and all the chests : in short, it breaks to pieces every thing that is in my house.

fields. The Norseman, who had only to stop in the house for that night, takes up his quarters in the kitchen, roasts his meat at the fire, and is quite merry ; at length he lays himself down to sleep. The bear, who has also finished his meal, and is tired with his journey, stretches himself by the fire-side.

*dô nû der guote man gelac  
unde slâfes nâch der muede psalac  
unt ouch der muede ber entslief,  
hoeret, wie ein schretel dort her lîef,  
daz was kûme drîer spannen lanc,  
gein dem viure ez vaste spranc.  
ez was gar eislich getân,  
unde hât ein rötêz keppel an.  
daz ir die wârheit wizzet,  
ez hât ein vleisch gespizzet  
an einen spîz isenîn,  
den truoc ez in der hende sîn.  
daz schretel ungehiure  
sich saxe zuo dem viure  
unde briet sîn vleisch durch lîpñar,  
waz ez des bern wart gewar  
ez dâhte in sînem sinne :  
waz tuot dîz kunder hinne ?  
ez ist sô griulîche getân !  
unde sol ez bî dir hie bestân,  
dû muost sîn lîhte schaden nemen ;  
nein, blîbens darf ez niht gezemen.  
ich hân die andern gar verjaget,  
unde bin ouch noch niht sô verzaget,  
ez muoz mir râmen dîz gemach.  
nîtlic' ez ûf den bern sach,  
ez sach ot dar unt allex dar,  
zelest erwac ez sich sîn gar*

*unde gap dem bern einen slac  
 mit dem spizze uf den nac.  
 er rampf sich unde grein es an,  
 daz Schretel spranc von im hindan  
 unde briet sin vleischel vürbax,  
 unz daz ez wart von smalze naz,  
 dem bern ez aber einex sluoc,  
 der ber im aber daz vertrauc,  
 ez briet sin vleisc vür sich dar  
 unz daz ez rehte wart gewar,  
 daz nû der brâte sûsete,  
 unt in der hitze brûsete,  
 den spiz ez mit dem brâten zöch  
 vaste uf über daz houbet hêch,  
 daz boese tuster (or custer ?) ungeslaht  
 sluoc ûz aller sîner maht  
 den mueden bern über daz mûl.  
 nû was der ber doch niht sò vûl,  
 er vuor uf unde lief ez an \*.*

\* Now when the good man laid down and enjoyed sleep after his fatigue, and the wearied bear was also sleeping, hark ! how a Schretel, scarce three spans high, comes running along, and goes up quickly towards the fire. It was dressed quite *eislich* (Elfish ?) and wore a red cap. That you may know the truth, he had put a piece of meat upon an iron spit, which he was carrying in his hand. The Schretel monster sat down near the fire, and roasted his meat ; and when he perceived the bear, he said within himself : “ What does this creature here ? It is so hideously dressed ! And if it should remain here with thee, thou mightest easily receive some hurt. No, troth ! it shall not abide here. The others I have scared away, and I am not so cowardly but it shall quit this room for me ! ” With anxious look he gazed upon the bear, he looked all round ; at length he roused himself, and gave the bear a blow upon the neck with the spit. The bear raised himself and grinned upon him ; the Schretel jumped from him,







Now the bear was not lazy, he sprang up and ran at him.

A scene of scuffling and scratching now commences between the bear and the Schretel; the bear growls so loud that his master awakes, and in his terror creeps into the oven :

*nû bîzá bîz, nû limmà lim !  
nû kratzà kratz, nû krimmâ kr'm !  
sie bizzen unde lummen  
sie krazten unde krummen.*

The combat is for a long time uncertain ; at length, however, the bear is victorious, and the Schretel suddenly disappears. The bear, quite fatigued and hurt, lies down on the ground and rests his wearied limbs. Early in the morning the Norseman creeps out of the oven, takes leave of the Dane, who is surprised to see him alive, and then continues his journey with his bear. Meantime the Dane is preparing his plough :

*ze acker er damite gienc,  
er mente sîn ohsen, hin treip er,  
nû lief daz Schretel dorthen  
unde trat ob im úf einen stein,  
mit bluote wâren siniu bein*

and continued to roast his meat ; and when it was well basted he gave the bear a blow ; but Bruin bore it patiently : he continued roasting his meat ; and when he saw that it began to hiss and froth, he lifted the meat on the spit over his head, and with all his might struck the bear across his snout. Now the bear was not so lazy ; he sprang up and ran at him.

berunnen uf unt ze tal,  
 sin libel daz was liberal  
 zekratzet unde zebizzen,  
 xexerret unde xerriken  
 was sin keppel daz ez truoc.  
 ez rief eislîch' unt lûte genuoc.  
 unde sprach dem bûmanne zuo,  
 ez rief wol dirstunt; "hörest dūz dū?  
 hörest dūz dū? hörest dūz jedoch?  
 lebet dîn grôze katze noch?"  
 er luoget uf unde sach ez an,  
 sus antwurt' im der bûman:  
 "jâ, jâ, min grôze katze,  
 dir ze trutze unt ze tratze  
 lebet sie, dū böses wîhtel, noch:  
 sam mir daz ühuel unde daz joch!  
 vûmf jungen sie mir hînt gewan,  
 die sint schoene unde wolgetân  
 laucsitic, wîz unde herlich,  
 der alten katzen alle gelîch."  
 "vûmf jungen?" sprach daz Schretelîn.  
 "ja, sprach er, uf die triuwe mîn,  
 louf hin unde schôuwe sie,  
 dū ne gesache sô schöner katzen nie,  
 besich doch, ob es wâr sî."  
 "pfî dich! sprach daz Schretel, pfî!  
 sol ich sie schouwen, wê mir wart,  
 nein, nein, ich kom niht uf die vart,  
 sint ir nû sehse worden,  
 sie begunden mich ermorden.  
 dîn eine tât mir è sô wê,  
 in dînen hof ich niemer mê  
 kom, die wîle ich hân mîn leben."  
 dîu rede kam dem bûman eben,  
 daz Schretel sâ vor im verswant,  
 der bûman kêrte heim zehant,

*in sinen hof zoch er sich wider  
unde was dâ mit gemache sider,  
er unde sin wip unt sinu kint,  
diu lebten dâ mit vrâuden sint\*.*

It is remarkable that the Schrat comes in the night to the fire to roast meat, as this agrees with what Gervase of Tilbury says in the passage before quoted: The wights came in the night to the fire, where they roasted frogs, and then ate them. The Schretel has rendered his house in-

\* He went with it to his field and drove his oxen before him. Now the Schretel ran that way, and stepped before him upon a stone; his legs were all besmeared with blood, his body was all over scratched and bitten, and the cap he wore was rumpled and torn. He called out like an Elf, and loudly enough, said to the farmer, "Dost thou hear? Dost thou hear? Dost thou hear, fellow? Is thy great cat still alive?" He turned and looked at it; and thus the farmer answered him; "Yes, yes, my great cat, to spite thee, is still alive, thou evil wight! To-day she has had five kittens, which are all fine and handsome, white and beautiful, all like the old cat."—"Five kittens!" says the Schretlin. "Yes! by my troth; run and look at them; you never saw finer kittens in all your life: go and see if it is true."—"No, indeed," says the Schretel, "no; if I were to look at them it would be the worse for me—no, no, I shall not go there. Now there are six of them—they might murder me: the one hurt me so much that I will never go into your house again so long as I live." This was just what the farmer wished to hear; the Schretel vanished, the farmer returned home immediately, took up his abode again in his house, where he dwelt in safety; he and his wife and children lived there happily.

tolerable to its owner, as the malignant spirit Grendel did the castle to the Danish king, who like him was delivered from his tormenter by a strange hero. Grendel, too, always carried on his tricks during the night. In this point of view it cannot be overlooked that many of our modern nursery tales, in which some brave traveller clears the place where he takes up his abode for the night, of ghosts and goblins, is founded on the same idea. In the morning the owner manifests the same surprise that his guest had escaped with his life ; sometimes, also, the wanderer is attended by an animal which, as in this case the bear, decidedly terminates the affair against the spirits.

#### 15. ELFIN ANIMALS.

It is believed in the Faroe islands, that large and fat sheep and cows, belonging to the fairies, feed invisibly among the other cattle, and that one of them, or one of their dogs, is sometimes seen. This superstition prevails in Iceland. Their herds are not supposed to be numerous, but very productive ; they show themselves only when they please. In Norway, the Huldre drive cattle before them, which are as *blue* as they are themselves. In Germany, too, they relate stories of a blue Elfin Cow, who knew beforehand if an enemy was approaching, and pointed out to the people

secure places of retreat (Strack's Beschreib. von Eilsen, p. 7). In Sweden, the Sea-woman drives *snow-white* cattle to pasture in the islands and on the beach (Schwed. Volksl. iii. 148), and the Elfin nymphs, in a certain song (Ibid. iii. 171 and 173) promise twelve white oxen.

The Scotch legend respecting the Elfin bull is circumstantial, though certainly very ancient, as it must have been known in Iceland as early as the beginning of the thirteenth century, as appears from the Eyrbyggja Saga (chap. 63), which is of that date. A cow was missing, and people pretended that they had seen her in the pasture with an ox which had the colour of a gray horse (*apalgrár*), and which obviously answers to the mouse-coloured bull of the Scotch tradition. During the winter, she suddenly returns to the stable, and towards the summer she has a bull-calf, which is so exceedingly large, that she dies in calving. An old blind woman, who had when young the gift of "second sight," on hearing the calf bellow, cried out, "This is the bellowing of an Elf, and not of a living creature; you will do well to kill it instantly!" She again repeats her assertion, which, however, on account of the beauty of the animal, is not attended to. It grows very strong, and roars in a frightful manner, and when four years old, it kills with its horns the master of the house, and then jumps into a lake.

In Germany, too, the Elf-bull appears to have been known. It is related in *Simplicissimus* (book 7. chap. 10), that as some herdsmen were tending their cattle near the Mummel See (that is, the Lake of the Waternixen, for they are called Muhmen, Mummeln, as the female land Elfs *Roggennuhmen*, vide No. 89), a brown bull had issued from it, and joined the rest of the cattle; a Waternixe immediately followed to bring him back; to whom he paid no regard, till the latter wished he might have all the misfortunes of men if he refused, upon which both returned into the water. We must compare with this the Irish tradition of the cow with the seven heifers, and the Swiss legend of the spectre animal which ravaged the Alps, and could only be tamed by a bull trained for the purpose. (*Deut. Sag.* No. 142.)

#### 16. WITCHES AND SORCERESSES.

We conclude these remarks with the following, which immediately result from them. The belief in fairies and spirits prevailed over all Europe long before the introduction of Christianity. The teachers of the new faith endeavoured to abolish the deeply-rooted heathenish ideas and customs of the people, by representing them as sinful and connected with the devil. Hence many originally pleasing fables and popular amusements gradually assumed a gloomy, mixed, and dubious character.

Not that the heathenish belief was without the contrast of evil: the northern mythology has beings which are not amiable, particularly females who ride out by night to do mischief, to excite storms and tempests: they were not unknown in Germany\*.

The people too could never be fully weaned from the innocent notions of their ancient opinions;

\* The following Glosses refer to this place: Gl. Vindob. *lamia*: *holzmuwa* and *holzmove*. Gl. Trev. 70<sup>a</sup> *holzmuwa*, *lamia*. Gl. Lindenbrog. 996<sup>b</sup> *lamia*: *holzmuwo* Gl. Flor. 988<sup>b</sup> *holzruna*, *lamia*.—Gl. Doc. 219<sup>b</sup> *holzmuoja*, *wildaz wip*, *lamia*. *Muoja* seems to signify the screaming, bellowing, lowing. Tradit. Fuldens. ii. 544, *domus*, *wildero wibo*, a place. The rough *Elf*, who endeavours to entice *Wolfdietrich*, and throws a charm over him, appears to be such a savage wood-nymph. In the *Kolotzer Codex*, we find the following passage, p. 261, 262.

Ô wê du unholde,  
sitzeſt du hie mit golde  
gezieret und behangen!  
es iſt dir wol ergangen  
ich wil des weſen ſicher  
du ſoldeſt billicher  
dâ ze holze varn.  
(die beſcholtene antwortet:)  
Ich bin kein unholde\*.

\* O woe! thou sorceress,  
Dost thou sit here adorned  
And hung about with gold!  
Thou hast been very prosperous!  
(The accused replies:)  
I am no sorceress.



and, as we have endeavoured to show, scattered features and images of heathenism were imperceptibly adopted in the legends, usages, and festivals of the Christian church. On the whole, however, a gloom has been cast in the minds of the people over their ideas and opinions of those ancient traditions. To a dread of incorporeal beings, that of the sinful and diabolical has been added. They avoid the good people as one would shun a heretic; and, perhaps, much of what distinguishes heretics has for that reason been ascribed to the fairies; for instance, abstaining from cursing and swearing. The dances on the Brocken, those around the fire on Midsummer Eve, were nothing more than festivals of the Elves of light: they have been transformed into hideous, devilish dances of witches; and the rings in the meadow-dew, formerly ascribed to the light footsteps of the fairies, are now attributed to this cause. The beings, too, which were formerly believed to be kind and gracious, are become odious and inimical, though the ancient name expressive of good qualities still subsists here and there (in Hesse and Thuringia, Dame Holle of whom they have made the more idol-like Dame Venus).\* All stories of witches have something

\* The oldest ordinances against witches are: *Lex Sállica*, tit. 67. *Lex Langob.* l. i. tit. xi. cap. 9. *Caroli M. Capitul. de partibus Saxoniz*, cap. 5. Vide a particularly remarkable

dry and monotonous ; only the lees of the old fancy remain. They are sterile and joyless, like witchcraft itself, which leaves those who practise it poor and indigent, without any worldly compensation for the loss of their souls. Cervantes says (*Pericles*, ii. 8), " The witches do nothing that leads to any object." Yet we see how accurately that which the tortured imagination of these unhappy persons can confess, leads through so troubled a stream to the fountain of the fairy legends \*. The witches dance in the silence of night, in cross-roads, secluded mountains, and woodland pastures. If an uninitiated person approaches, if he utters a sacred name, every illusion vanishes. The cock crowing (the break of day) interrupts the assembly (*Remigius Dæmonolatria*, German trans. Frankfurt, 1598. viii. p. 121). Like the Elves they have no salt or bread at their meals (*Idem*, p. 126). (*Ac-tenmäsziqe Hexen Processe* (Trials of Witches), Eichstädt, 1811. p. 32). The *Druden Shot* is the Elf-bolt ; on Fridays the Drud hears the most acutely. In the night the witches ride with great velocity through the air on animals, or inanimate passage in *Regino*, *Eccl. Discipl.* lib. 2. § 364. See Mone on *Heathenism*, 2, 128, who views the thing in the proper light.

\* The ancient appellation still occurs here and there. In the Low German Romance of *Malagis* (Heidelberg MS. f. 118<sup>b</sup>) the sorceress is expressly called the *Elfin*.

sticks and forks, invigorated with magic ointment, in the same manner as the Irish Cluricaune rides on a reed ; whoever has accompanied them, unperceived by them, requires days and weeks to return home. They brew tempests in pots, till a hailstorm arrives and beats down the corn, as the French popular story relates of Oberon, that he made storms, rain, and hail ; or the Servian Vile gathers clouds (Wuk. i. No. 323). Their look, the squeeze of their hand, affects cattle, less frequently men, but oftenest little children. Almost every confession of such actions must be founded on a real event, the thousand-fold natural causes or motives of which were overlooked. But it was not the people so much as the judges who were exasperated against the witches. One trial led to another ; and why should the frightful number of witches have lived in the sixteenth, seventeenth, and first half of the 18th century in a little tract of country, in a small town where sorcerers were before as little heard of as in our days ? The intercourse with the evil spirit\*

\* He is called Meister Hemmerlein (Remigius, loc. cit. p. 181. 240. 280. 298. 359. 387. 408. 448) exactly as the mountain spirit (Deut. Sag. l. 3). Has this any connexion with the Hämmerlin of Zurich (born 1389) ? See John Müller, 3. 164. 4. 290, and Kirchhofer's Proverbs, p. 79. Or is Hammer a much older name for Devil and Enchanter ? See Frisch under Hämmerlein : Poltergeist, Erdschmidlein, Klopfer.

of which they were accused, is no more than what the earlier traditions relate of the connexions of the fairies of both species with mankind. The penal laws of those times (revived and confirmed by the bull of Innocent VIII. in 1484), according to Charles V. Criminal Code (ccc. 109) enacted cruel water ordeals, the torture, and burning alive; and many thousands suffered death, all innocent of the imputed impossible crimes. The merciless error may be excused, if it can, by the circumstance that most of the condemnations appear to have fallen upon women of bad character, and otherwise deserving of punishment. It is not in all countries that an insignificant superstition of the people has exercised such a dreadful influence; it was a fearful parody of real life on the system of the invisible world founded on ancient poetry.



## ADDITIONS TO THE AUTHORITIES.

*From the Manuscript Communication of Dr. Wilhelm Grimm.*

### HOLLAND.

IN those districts where the dwellings of the *white women* are found, the inhabitants are unanimously heard to declare, that frightful apparitions had appeared in the neighbourhood; that there had been frequently heard within woeful cries, groans, and lamentations of men, women, and children; that by day and night people had been fetched to women in labour; that these spirits foretold to superstitious men their good or bad fortune; that they were able to give information respecting stolen, lost, or mislaid effects, who the guilty were, &c.; and the inhabitants behaved to them with great respect, as recognising something divine in them; that some of the people who had, on certain occasions, been into their dwellings, had seen and heard incredible things, but did not dare to tell of them at the peril of their life; that they were more active than any creatures, that they

were always dressed in white, and were therefore not called the *white women*, but merely the *whites*. Picard's *Antiquities of Drenthe*, p. 46.

## FINNLAND.

Para, a kind of goblin among the Finns, is borrowed from the Swedes, who call him Bjära; he steals the milk from strange cows, drinks it, or carries it into the churn. If a certain fungus (*Mucor unctuosus flavus*, Lin.) is boiled in tar, salt, and sulphur, and beaten up with a whip, the owner of the Goblin appears, and intercedes for him.

The Alp is known under the name of *Painajainen* (the presser). It resembles a white nymph, illumines the whole chamber with its brightness, and presses upon the breast of the sleeping person, who screams out and laments; it likewise hurts children, and causes them to squint, and may be expelled by a steel or a broom placed under the pillow.

The house goblin Tonttu, from the Swedish Tomtgubbe, is also common in Finnland. Rüh's *Finnland*, p. 304, 305.

## LIVONIA.

*Swehtas jumprawas* (literally, holy virgins), according to the Livonian superstition, are certain

invisible spirits and goblins, which, during the night, do all the spinning, sewing, grinding, and threshing. Stender Livonian Grammar, p. 146.

#### ARMENIA.

Niebuhr (Travels, ii. 399) on his journey to Diarbeck, heard of a *sweeping spirit* in the Armenian convent of Kara Klise. The bishop had cast him out of a person possessed, and condemned him to sweep every night the church, the cells of the priests, the kitchen, and the hearth, and to remove the rubbish.

#### AFRICA.

Mumbo Jumbo is the *Man Rupert*, among the Mandingos; he has a magic wand. See Mungo Park.

The Cadi of Sennaar asked me with an air of great importance, "if I knew when *Hagiuge Magiuge* would come? What my books said on the subject, and whether they agreed with theirs?" I answered, "that I could not say any thing, as I did not know what was contained in their books." Upon this he said, "*Hagiuge Magiuge* are little people of the size of bees or flies of Sennaar. They issue from the earth in countless numbers, have two chiefs, who ride on an ass, the hairs of which are all pipes, each of which plays a par-

ticular air. Those persons, however, who hear and follow them, they carry with them into hell. James Bruce, v. ii.

#### LOWER BRETAGNE.

In the neighbourhood of Morlaix, the people are afraid of evil spirits and genii, whom they call *Teurst*; they believe that one of them, *Teursapouliet*, goes about, and appears to them under the form of a domestic animal.

They say, that previous to a death, a hearse (which they call *carriquet an nankon*) covered with a white cloth, and drawn by skeletons, is seen, and the creaking of the wheels is heard before the house in which a sick person is to die.

They are convinced that below the castle of Morlaix there are a great number of little men, a foot high, who live in subterraneous holes, where they may be heard walking about and playing with cymbals. The mountain dwarfs are the guardians of secret treasures, which they sometimes bring up, and allow every one who finds them to take a handful, but on no account any more; for if any one attempted to fill his pockets, he would not only see the gold instantly vanish, but also be punished, by having his ears boxed by innumerable invisible hands.

The people of Lower Bretagne still entertain



great dread of other spirits and dæmons, which are said to interfere in many human affairs. There are, for instance, *Sand Yan y tad* (Saint John and his father), who carry by night five lights at their fingers' ends, and make them go round with the rapidity of a wheel; it is a kind of *ignis fatuus*.

Other spirits skim the milk. A malignant wind, *aëel fal*, ravages the country.

Among the ruins of Tresmalaouen dwell the *Courils*, dwarfs of a malevolent disposition, and in some measure magicians, who are very fond of dancing. They have their nocturnal meetings amidst the Druids' stones, and dance, leap, and caper in regular time. Woe to the shepherd who has the temerity to approach them! he is obliged to join in their dance, and hold out till the cock-crowing. Many have been found dead on the following morning through giddiness and exhaustion. Woe to the damsels who come near the *Courils*! Nine months afterwards something new takes place in the house; the birth of a young sorcerer, who is not indeed a dwarf, but to whom the malicious spirits give the features of a young villager; so great is their power and subtilty.

Wicked fairies, known by the name of the nocturnal washer-women (*eur cunnerez noz*), appear on the shore and invite passengers to assist them

in rinsing the linen of the dead. If a person refuses, or does it against his inclination, they draw him into the water and break his arms.

In many houses they never sweep the rooms after sunset, that they may not, with their broom, injure the dead, who walk about at that time ; a single blow would irritate them, and be attended with serious consequences. On All Saints' Day in particular, the house is supposed to swarm with them ; their number is like the sand on the sea-shore.

In order to find the corpse of a drowned person they fasten a burning light to a boat, and let it swim on the water ; where it stops, the dead person lies.

The sea-nymphs, too, have been seen by many thousand fishermen. They excite the most violent tempests, and from them there is no deliverance except by prayer and invocation of the Patron Saint.

They consult the birds whether they shall marry, and how old they are to be. They count how often the cock crows before midnight : if it is an even number of times, the wife dies ; if an odd number, the husband.

They believe that, on Christmas Eve, no ruminating domestic animal goes to sleep ; that they

consult on the life and death of the inmates of the house, and for this reason they give them a double share of food.

If the dogs bark in the night, it is a presage of death.

They observe hereditary customs in cases of sickness and pregnancy, steep the body-linen in consecrated water, watch by the dead to keep off the evil spirits, make pilgrimages to our Lady des Portes, and pass the hand over her garments; the rustling and shining of which is an indication of serene days and a plentiful harvest.

In the neighbourhood of Vannes, there is a very popular belief in a spirit of colossal stature. He is called *Teus* or *Bugelnoz*, and never shows himself but between midnight and two o'clock. His garments are white, and his office is to disappoint Satan of his prey. He then spreads his mantle over the victim which the evil one is about to fetch. The latter, who has to come across the sea, cannot long bear the presence of the good spirit; he sinks again, and the spirit vanishes.

From the *Journal Der Gesellschafter*, 1826. No. 36, where the authority is not mentioned. See also Legonider Dictionn. Celtobreton. vocibus: *are-houere, ankelcher, bugelnoz, boudik, gobilin, korr, korrik*.

MISCELLANEOUS.

On the goblins of the Romans, V. Plautus *Aulularia*. Prolog.

Nequis miretur, qui sim, paucis eloquar  
Ego *lar sum familiaris*; ex hac familia  
Unde me exeuntem me aspexistis.

I have communicated a Norwegian fairy tale from the verbal narrative of a friend, to the *Märchen Almanach* of Wilhelm Hauff for 1827. Stuttgart.

Some particulars relative to the Servian Vile may be found in *Wesely Serbische Hochzeit lieder* Pest. p. 17. 1286.

From the Faroe songs of Lyngbye, Randers, 1822, we may learn something from the *Liede von Quörfin* respecting the nocturnal orgies and occupations of the dwarfs. I have reviewed this book in the *Götting. gelehr. Anzeigen*, 1824. No. 143. p. 14—17.

In the ancient Noricum (the modern Tyrol, Salzburg, Stiria, and Carinthia) there is a very popular belief in a *Schranel*, the peevish mountain spirit; in an Alp spirit *Donanadel*; in the terrific *Perchte*, which announces a death; in the spirit *Butz*, which causes people to go astray; in the *Dusel*, *Klaubauf*, *Lotter*, *Bartel*, which creep into lonely houses and steal children; in the *Klage*, the

most dreadful and terrific image of inexorable destiny, the *playing wood-women*, and other spirits of meadows, springs, and fountains. These beings are generally invisible, but oftentimes appear to men. Muchar Röm. Norikum. Grätz, 1826, ii. 37.

Respecting the Wendischen dwarfs (they are called *Berstuc*, *Markropet*, and *Koltk*) see Masch Obotritische Alterthümer, iii. 39. Wiener Jahrbücher der Litteratur.



THE MABINOIGION,  
AND  
FAIRY LEGENDS  
OF  
WALES.



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“ This was set downe, for causes more than one,  
The world beleeves, no more than it hath seene :  
When things lye dead, and tyme is past and gone,  
Blynd people say, it is not so we weene.  
It is a tale devisde to please the eare  
More for delight of toyes, then troth to beare :  
But those that think, this may a fable be  
To author's good, I send them here from me.”  
CHURCHYARD'S WORTHINES OF WALES.



THE compiler of this work having been favoured with several original communications respecting the Legends of Wales, which he found it impossible to interweave with the notes of the former volumes, has arranged them in the following pages ; as in many cases they afford striking illustrations of the legends current in Ireland.

The notice of the Mabinogion is chiefly derived from the kind assistance of Dr. Owen Pughe, who, besides the information conveyed in the introductory letter, placed in the hands of the compiler his manuscript translation of these romances, and with permission to make extracts. In availing himself of such flattering liberality, the compiler sincerely hopes that by more fully explaining to the public the nature of the Mabinogion than could be done within the limits of a prospectus, he may assist rather than injure the learned doctor's



subscription list \*. And as expressing his own sentiments, he will repeat the words of the Editor of the *Cambro Britain*, in his prefatory address to Dr. Pughe on the appearance of the second volume of that work :

“ By a translation of the *Mabinogion*,

\* In 1825, Dr. Owen Pughe issued the following prospectus for the publication of the *Mabinogion*, so soon as subscribers should be obtained sufficient to defray the expense of printing :

“ In three volumes, demy octavo, price 2*l.* in boards ; fifty copies will be on large superfine paper, price 4*l.*, The *Mabinogion* ; or, the *Ancient Romances of Wales*, in the original language, and a literal translation into English. By W. Owen Pughe, LL.D. F.A.S.

“ A general introduction, containing a review of the literature of Wales, in the early ages, will be prefixed ; and each of the tales will be illustrated by such allusions as occur in the works of the bards, and other memorials.

“ It is presumed, by the editor, that these interesting remains of British lore will be considered a valuable acquisition by the literary world, exhibiting a faithful and unique portraiture of the ancient manners and customs that prevailed among the *Cymmry*, through the middle ages. They may also assist in deciding a long-disputed question respecting the origin of all tales of a similar character diffused over Europe, and form an important accession to the curious and valuable illustrations of the subject, elicited by the learned researches of Ellis, in ‘ *The early English Romances*.’

“ Names of subscribers received by Messrs. Lewis and Alston, 30, Bishopsgate-Street ; Mr. Jones, 90, Long Acre ; Mr. Ellis, 2, John-Street, Oxford-Street ; Mr. H. Hughes, 15, St. Martin’s-le-Grand ; and by the Editor, Denbigh.”

avowedly among the most curious of our ancient remains, you will not only impose on your country a lasting obligation, but you will enrich in an essential degree the literary treasures of Europe. There may be other departments of learning more useful, but there is none more generally attractive than that in which the genius of romance has painted the fantastic splendours of her visionary reign. And among the numerous ancient productions of this nature, there are few, if any, that excel in interest the juvenile romances of Wales."

A gentleman, who is unknown even by name to the compiler, has furnished him with some of the subsequent remarks on the romantic and chivalrous tales of the Welsh. And to a lady (whose name he would feel proud in being allowed to mention) he is indebted for the extensive oral collection of tales. That lady thus prefaced her communications :

"The subject of Welsh fairies is one which interests me much; but the opportunities of conversing with story-tellers are few, the race being now almost extinct in Wales. The increase of wealth, the intercourse with enlightened Saxons, the improvement of roads, and the

progress of education, have nearly banished 'the fair family.' However, I have the good fortune to inhabit a romantic valley in Glamorganshire, and am acquainted with some old secluded mountaineers who speak no language but their own, and who inherit the superstition of their ancestors. They see the fairies—they hear their enchanting music, and sometimes join in their merry dances. They are also familiar with ghosts and strange noises, behold supernatural lights, and always foretell death by certain signs. I am sorry to add, too, that my country folk have frequent communications with 'the old gentleman,' who visits them in all possible shapes and places. A favourite spot is near a Roman road on one of the hills behind this house, where it is supposed treasure is hidden \*.

“ The stories which I send are deficient in the charm of national idiom, as they are trans-

\* In a subsequent letter the fair writer says :—“ Mama remembers a meeting of twenty preachers assembled on a hill not far from this, to combat the wicked spirit who had enticed so many to sinful practices, by tempting them with bars of gold, which were dug up near a Roman causeway called Sarn Helen. A farmer, a tenant of ours, who became suddenly rich, was commonly supposed to have sold himself to the evil one.”

lations from the Welsh; but I have endeavoured to imitate as closely as possible any peculiarities of phraseology, and in some instances have preserved the expressions in the original."

To the materials thus derived the compiler has added several fairy tales from printed sources, which are acknowledged; and on the entire he has appended notes, gleaned from various authorities. Even on this limited collection, like more extensive commentators, he has found these notes to exceed considerably his original intention; but he trusts that circumstance will not render them less acceptable. Although imperfectly qualified for the task, his aim has been to excite a general interest towards the more abstruse Legends of Wales. And in this endeavour he has been obliged in many instances to repeat particulars with which several readers must be familiar. He, however, preferred this fault to that of leaving any point, however trivial, unexplained.

The Ancient Bardic Poems and other remains, which are so frequently referred to, and quoted from, were collected and published by the Welsh Mecænas, Mr. Owen Jones,

better known as “Honest Owen Jones, the Thames Street Furrier.” This patriot printed at his own expense, in 3 vols. large 8vo., the *Archaiology of Wales*. 1st and 2d vols. in 1801; 3d vol. in 1807. A work which probably has preserved these curious remains from destruction, and certainly from oblivion\*.

\* The three volumes are spoken of by booksellers as “rare,” and at present sell in boards from ten to twelve guineas.



## THE MABINOGION.

TO THE AUTHOR OF THE IRISH FAIRY LEGENDS.

DEAR SIR,

I BEG leave to express to you, that I was greatly interested, by the perusal of the Irish Legends, at finding the fairy tales so generally and uniformly diffused over Britain and Ireland ; for there appears a great similarity between those popular traditions, as preserved in the Emerald Isle (*Iwerdhon*) and in Wales, though in the latter country a great many have sunk into oblivion, which I used to listen to when young.

Among those in Wales, *âr lavar gwlad*, or, on the voice of the country, according to our common saying, the most deeply rooted in the public memory and most general are, “ The Man who killed his Greyhound,” and the “ Two prominent Oxen.”

The first has found its way into the books of tours in Wales, and been applied to Llywelyn, our last prince ; but this is not warranted by the tradition, and a strong proof of its high antiquity is,

that Sir William Jones, in his "Institutes of Menu \*," gives the tale literally the same, from Persian tradition. The tale is thus related: A family went out to work at the harvest, leaving an infant sleeping in a cradle, and a favourite greyhound in the house as a safeguard. The head of the family had occasion to return home, and on entering the house, he was alarmed at finding the cradle overturned, and the dog lying in a corner covered with blood, and also blood about the floor. The man immediately killed his dog, supposing that the animal had destroyed the child; but upon turning up the cradle, he discovered the child asleep, with the clothes about him, and a large serpent dead by his side. The man, when it was too late, found how inconsiderately he had destroyed the faithful guardian of his child, and hence comes the old proverb, "*Edivared ag y gwr à ladhes ei vilgi*:" that is, as repentant as the man who killed his greyhound †.

\* *Menw*, in Welsh, is intellect, mind. *Menw mab Teirg-waedh*, the Son of the three Cries, agrees in attributes with the Indian Menu. The latter gave the three Vedas, or the three revelations, and *gwaedh* in Welsh becomes *waedh* under many forms of construction, and is thus identified with the Sanscrit *ved*.

† The romantic village of Beddgelart (the grave of the Gilbertines), in North Wales, is popularly said to be the scene of this legend, in which a wolf is substituted for the

The adventure of the two oxen, Ninio and Paibio, as drawing the crocodile out of the lake, is localised to several pools in Wales \*. There is

serpent. According to the modern tradition, the name of the dog was *Gelart* or *Cillart*, oddly enough anglicised into *Killhart*.

“ And till great Snowdon's rocks grow old  
And cease the storm to brave,  
The consecrated spot shall hold  
The name of ‘ *Gelart's Grave*.’ ”

The names of many places in Wales appear to be more obviously connected with the story. Thus *Bwrdd Arthur* (Arthur's table) in Carmarthenshire, a druidical remain (see Gibson's Camden, col. 752), is likewise called *Gwal y Vflast*, the couch or *Πατος* of the greyhound. There is a monument of the same kind, called also *Gwal y Vflast*, in Glamorganshire; another called *Llech y Ast*, the flat stone of the Dog in Cardiganshire. And in Merionethshire, we find *Ffynawen Maen Milgi*, the spring of the greyhound's stone, a stream issuing out of the side of Berwyn mountain.

This legend, although more romantic, bears some resemblance to that related in Ireland of Partholan, who, in a fit of jealousy, killed his wife's greyhound, which was called *Samer*, and hence *Inis Samer*, or the Dog's Isle, in Lough Erne. Not far from Brurea, in the county of Limerick, the figure of a greyhound, rudely sculptured on a rock, is pointed out by the peasantry with the tale, that the figure is in memory of a faithful dog, whom his master had killed in a burst of passion.

\* The story of the prominent Oxen (*Y çain bdnawg*) or the oxen having a prominence, probably buffaloes, drawing the *Avanc* (Crocodile) out of the lake of floods, is said to be a memorial of the Deluge. See the original Triads in



one in Carnavonshire, and another in Denbighshire, and both are called *Llyn dau ychain*, or the Pool of the two Oxen. I have formerly heard an old man (and probably the very last performer), playing upon the *Crwth* \*, a singular piece of music, which imitated the lowing of the oxen, the clanking of their chains, &c. in drawing the animal out of the lake.

Besides those legends, which were popularly recited, there is another remarkable class of tales

Arch. of Wales, and translation, with interesting remarks, in the *Cambro Briton*, 1820, vol. i. p. 127. Some curious particulars relating to this inquiry will also be found in the second volume of Bryant's "Analysis of Ancient Mythology," and Mr. Davies's Works.

These oxen belonged to Hu Gadern, or Hu the Mighty, respecting whom see the Notices collected by Dr. Owen Pughe, from the *Triads*, and published in the *Cambro Register*, 1818, vol. iii. p. 162, and an extremely ingenious and learned paper in the *Cambro Briton*, vol. ii. p. 59.

\* The *Crwth*, pronounced Crooth, was an instrument held by the Welsh next in estimation to the harp. It was on the principle of the violin, and had six strings; four of these were played with a bow, and the fifth and sixth, which served as a base, were struck with the thumb.

Crowder is still used in some districts of England for fiddler. The adventures of Crowdero in *Hudibras* are well known. Venantius Fortunatus (l. vii. p. 169, ed. Mogunt 1617) in panegyrising the *Dux Lupus*, tells him that the British *Chrotta* sings him.

"Romanus que lyra plaudat tibi, barbarus harpa  
Græcus anhillata, *chrotta* Britanna canat."

or romances, which are preserved in ancient manuscripts \*, but which in latter times have entirely passed away from public memory.

Their existence, however, has been made slightly known to the literary world within the last thirty years, by an announcement of their intended publication, but this has not hitherto been accomplished. I have lately renewed my intention of printing the originals, with a translation, in three volumes, by subscription, and as soon as a prospect of indemnity for the expense appears likely, the work will go to press.

The tales thus announced are known under the title of *Mabinogion* †, which implies matters interesting to youth.

\* An Account of the principal Collections of Welsh Manuscripts was communicated by Dr. Owen Pughe to the Antiquarian Society, and is published in the *Archaeologia*, vol. xiv. p. 211—220. In this very valuable paper, the Doctor states, that having made a calculation, he is enabled to infer, that he has perused upwards of thirteen thousand poetical pieces in Welsh of various denominations (for the purpose of collecting words) in the course of about eighteen years, whilst engaged in compiling his Welsh dictionary.

† The Welsh word *Mabinogion* (in the singular *Mabinogi*) may be rendered by *juvenilia*, and signifies any thing that appertains to youth. It is, however, commonly used in a limited acceptation, and understood to mean certain romantic fictions, or stories for children, which were in former ages the popular legends of the country. These legends are sometimes

These are some of the most curious remains of the literature of Wales, composed and popularly recited at a period when that country enjoyed its own independent government. From the consideration of various circumstances recorded in our ancient manuscripts, it would appear that a recital of heroic achievements must have been conducted on a regular system, and that there was a class of persons under the appellation of *Datgeiniaid*, or reciters, who peculiarly cultivated it as a means of support, under the sanction of the laws. At what time such a system originated, it would be difficult to determine, but that it had its source in the bardic institution, there can be little room to doubt.

Judging from all the evidence that can be adduced, it may be concluded that all the tales of the Mabinogion must have been put into the form in which they are still preserved, at different periods anterior to the union of Wales with England under Edward I. in the year 1283 \*.

alluded to under the name *Ystoriau*, or Tales, and *Hen Ystoriowon*, or old stories.

\* To persons conversant with Welsh antiquities some instances of anachronism are evident in the Mabinogion; with respect to Pwyll himself, the hero of the first tale, in particular; and, therefore, no pretensions to exactness of date can be made. Taliesin, who flourished in the sixth century,

The traditions forming the basis of the Mabinogion are so intimately blended with our early poetry, and are so completely its machinery, that the high antiquity of these tales admits of no question \*. Most of the real characters introduced in them are recorded in our historical memorials, and many of the places mentioned are still known, and bear the same names.

mentions several incidents in these tales ; so also do the Welsh poets, who flourished in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. Many of the personages and events in the Mabinogion are likewise mentioned in the Triads.

\* In the tale of Pwyll, the real personages are Pwyll, Pryderi, Teyrnnon, Twrv, Blivant, and Hybaid Hen. Rhianon, the Dynion Mwyn, or Fairy, is a mythological creature ; and Arawn, Havcan, and Gwawl mab Clud are imaginary beings.

Rhianon was a character in the bardic mythology, the song of whose birds so entranced any one who heard them, that they listened unconscious of years passing away. The name Rhianon implies the queen, or paragon of the fair sex ; and the Welsh poets complimented a lady for superior endowments by comparing her to Rhianon :

“ *Gwenhwyvar !  
Ei pryd a cudiwyd â pryd :  
Dygn covlon Rhianon rod !*”

“ Gwenhwyvar ! Her countenance has been covered with earth : severe the recollections of her having the gift of Rhianon.”—*Goronwy Cyriog*. 1300.

Arawn signifies eloquent one ; Havcan, the splendour of summer, or summerahine ; and Gwawl mab Clud means, light son of transit.

The Mabinogion are divisible into three classes :

In the first class are to be included, Pwyll, Prince of Dimetia; Bran's Expedition to Ireland \*; Manawydan's † Destruction of the Enchantment that was over Dimetia ‡; and The Magical Ad-

\* See subsequent account of this Mabinogi; the events of which arise out of the tale of Pwyll.

† Manawydan is the brother of Bran, and one of the seven who carried his head to London. The events of this tale are a continuation of the former, and its conclusion is the doing away of some spells or enchantments laid upon Dimetia, arising out of the events of the tale of Pwyll.

‡ " Neere Deneuoir, the seat of the Dimetian king,  
Whilst Cambria was herself full, strong, and flourish-  
ing," &c.

So sings old Drayton in his Poly-olbion.

The Dimetia of Roman writers is called in Welsh *Dyved*, and, strictly speaking, denotes the modern county of Pembroke; which last name of Pembroke is a corruption of the Welsh *Penbro*, or head land. *Penbro* and *Dyved* are epithets equally descriptive of the country; as the latter implies, the region of gliding waters, in allusion to the two channels of *Dau Cledau*, which glide nearly through its whole extent, and form the haven of Milford. But according to the ancient divisions of Wales, *Ceredigion*, or Cardiganshire, the Vale of *Tywi* and *Gwyr*, or Gower, were often comprehended under the name of *Dyved*, or *Scisylwg*. By the poets it was denominated *Bro Erylt*, *Tŷr Pryderi*, and *Gwlad yr Hud*, the country of illusion :

" *Y mwyalcen awenawl—  
Hed yn pres i gwlad Erylt.*"

ventures of Gwdion, under Math, the son of Mathonwy\*. These four tales follow each other in

“Thou blackbird, abounding in melody—fly hastily to the country of Erylt.”—*Dav. ab Gwilym*. 1340.

“*Clyw mi hav—  
Hed trosoŷ i tir Erylt  
O permed gwlad Gwyned gwyll.*”

“Hear me, summer—fly for me to the land Erylt, from the middle of the wild country of Gwyned.”—*The same*.

“*Gwen Eleri  
Gwlad Pryderi  
Yw gwraid deri  
Gwrd à tirir.*”

“Fair Eleri! the country of Pryderi is where the roots of mighty oaks will be grounded.”—*L. Glyn. Coti*. 1460.

“*Dyved a somed o symud ei mawred  
Am cryr bro yr Hud.*”

“Dyved has been disappointed from the removal of its dignity, for the eagle of the land of illusion.”—*Dav. ab Gwilym*. 1350.

\* This tale follows the preceding in connexion; but the incidents in it are distinct, so that it may be considered as a separate one. It opens with an embassy from Math, prince of Gwynedd (Venedotia) to Pryderi, the son of Pwyll, prince of Dyved (Dimetia). The ambassadors are twelve bards, with Gwydion, the son of Don, at their head, who had magic spells at command. The object was by means of rich presents to obtain a race of new animals, of which Pryderi had possession, and these were swine, being the first of the kind in the island. The request is refused; but Gwydion, by illusions, obtains

connexion, and abound with invisible agencies of various kinds, with many allusions to mythological persons and things of remote antiquity\*.

The heroes of the next class are those who seek adventures to entitle them to the honour of being enrolled among the knights of Arthur. These are, Owen, the son of Urien; Peredur, the son of Evrog; and Geraint, the son of Erbin. Trystan was the hero of another tale, to which many allusions are made by the bards; but of which not a Welsh copy is now to be found. To make amends, however, a version of it by Thomas of Ercildoune has been given to the world by Sir Walter Scott. This class has an identity of character with the romances of the middle ages, which are familiar from the elegant synopsis given of them by Ellis.

There are four other miscellaneous tales, which do not fall within the foregoing classes: These are, The Contention of Lludh and Llevelys†; The

the swine. Pryderi, in revenge, invades Gwynedd: the consequence is the ruin of both counties; and the tale proceeds with a series of spells often very fanciful and striking.

\* The originals of these four tales are preserved in the "*Llyfyr Coch o Hergest*," or Red Book of Hergest, in Jesus College, Oxford, pages 700. 726. 739. 751, and in the Hengwrt library other copies are to be found.

† Lludh, son of Beli, was the father of Caswallawn (Cassivellaunus); he and Llevelys, his brother, are described play-

Dream of Maximus \*; The Dream of Rhonabwy†, and The History of Taliesin.

Some tales, to which frequent references are made by the Welsh bards, will not be inserted in the edition of the Mabinogion, which I intend printing, as they are already before the public; such as the *San-Greal* and *Morte Arthur*, which were originally in Welsh, as may be seen by a fine copy of them at Hengwrt, written in the thirteenth century. There are also Welsh copies of *Sir Bevis of Hampton*, and of *Charlemagne*. The latter tale may have been, as suggested by Leyden, originally composed in Brittany; and the author must have been well versed in British lore, as the tale contains much of the mythology of *Hu Gadarn*, or *Hu the Mighty*.

I shall conclude this notice with giving two instances of the correctness of tradition, as corresponding with things related in the Mabinogion.

ing at ball, which, with the events the game produced, and their reconciliation, form the subject of this tale.—The original in the Red Book of Hergest, p. 705.

\* The Dream of Maximus is concerning his elevation to power, and in it are narrated the incidents leading to its accomplishment.—The original in the Red Book of Hergest, p. 697.

† The original will be found in the Red Book of Hergest, p. 555.



The first is concerning Bronwen, the Aunt of Caractacus, who is said, in the tale of Bran, to have been buried on the banks of the Alaw, in Anglesea\*. There is an islet in that river still bearing the name of Ynys Bronwen, or the Isle of Bronwen; and a friend of mine, with others, made a discovery there in the year 1813, which confirms in a very remarkable manner the historical truth whereon the tale of Bran is founded.

The particulars of the discovery were inserted by that indefatigable antiquary, Sir Richard C. Hoare, in the *Cambro Briton*, vol. ii. p. 71. The following is an extract from that account:—"A farmer living on the banks of the Alaw having occasion for stones to make some addition to his farm-buildings, and having observed a stone or two peeping through the turf of a circular elevation on a flat not far from the river, was induced to examine it, when, after paring off the turf, he came to a considerable heap of stones, or *carnedh*, covered with earth, which he removed with some degree of caution, and got to a cist formed of coarse flags, canted and covered over. On removing the lid he

\* "*Bedd petruâl a wnaed i Bronwen ferch Lyr ar lôn Alaw ac yno y claddwyh hi.*"

"A square grave was made for Bronwen, the daughter of Lyr, on the banks of the Alaw, and there she was buried."

found it contained an urn \*, placed with its mouth downwards, full of ashes and half calcined fragments of bone."

This urn, with its contents, are now in the possession of Mr. Richard Llwyd, the author of *Beaumaris Bay*, and other Poems, and now residing at Chester.

The other instance of the fidelity of tradition relates to the discovery of the fortress of Arianrod, mentioned in the tale of Math. Its situation was thus found.—Being in conversation respecting names of places in Anglesea with a late friend of mine from that country, he said that there was a remarkable ruin in the sea, nearly midway between Llandwyn Point and the church of Clynog, in Carnarvonshire, which sailors in passing over can see in the water, and which is dan-

\* From a sketch of Bronwen's urn.



gerous to vessels, and called by them *Gaeir Arianrod*. Thus, by mere accident, I found what I had often vainly inquired for. I thought that it was to be found somewhere on the coast of Arvon, and not about two miles from it in the sea.

Excuse my sending you so hasty and unconnected an account of the *Mabinogion*, and believe me to remain,

Dear Sir,

Yours truly,

WILLIAM OWEN PUGHZ.

*London, 11th May, 1827.*

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The following may be considered as fair specimens of the *Mabinogion*. The first is intended to illustrate the style of narration. Of the other, as connected with Irish tradition, a partial synopsis is given, which, at the same time, conveys an idea of the rapid succession of wild and romantic adventure in these tales.

THE COMMENCEMENT OF THE TALE OF

PWYLL\*, PRINCE OF DYVED †.

PWYLL, prince of Dyved, was lord of the seven provinces of Dyved. Once upon a time he was at Arberth ‡, a principal court belonging to him, and he formed the resolution to go out hunting, and the part of his territory where he intended to hunt was the glen of Cuch §.

\* Pwyll, means impulse, and in a secondary sense, it is reason, intellect, or wit. The original, and a translation of this Mabinogi, is given in the Cambrian Register for 1795, vol. i. p. 177, continued in vol. ii. for the following year, p. 322, from the Red Book of Jesus College, Oxford, a MS. of the fourteenth century, and it is completed in vol. iii. for 1818, p. 230.

† Dyved—Dimetia, as before explained.

‡ Arberth is at present a hundred in the south-east of Pembrokeshire, where there is a small town near the ruins of an old castle bearing the same name, the meaning of which is, "above the thicket." The English call it Narberth, from blending a part of the preposition *yn* with the original name.

§ The small river Cuch, through most of its course, divides the counties of Pembroke and Caermarthen, and falls into the Teivi a little above Cardigan. The name is descriptive of its dark bed beneath frowning rocks.

So he set out the same evening from Arberth, and proceeded as far as the head of the grove of Dyarwya\*, where he remained that night. The next morning, in the infancy of the day, he arose and went to the glen of Cuch, to turn out the dogs below the wood. He blew his horn, and entered fully upon the chase, following after the dogs, and separating himself from his companions.

As Pwyll listened to the cry of the hounds, he heard the note of another pack different from that of his own, and that note coming in an opposite direction. And he perceived a dusky glade in the wood, forming a level plain; and as his pack was entering the skirt of the glade, he saw a stag before the other pack; and towards the middle of the glade, beheld the hounds that were pursuing the stag overtake him, and throw him down; and then remarking the colour of the dogs, without thinking of noticing the stag, he deemed that of all the greyhounds he had seen in the world, he had not seen dogs of similar colour with them; for their colour was a clear shining white, and their ears were red, and as the dogs glittered with

\* There is in the river Cuch a romantic waterfall, near which we must look for the grove of Dyarwya, or the roaring torrent.

such whiteness, so glittered the redness of their ears.

Thereupon Pwyll came to the spot, and driving the pack that had killed the stag away, he drew his own pack on the stag. And while he was thus engaged in drawing on his dogs, he saw a knight coming after the other pack, upon a large dapple gray horse, having a bugle horn hanging round his neck, and clad in a hunting dress of dark grayish cloth.

The knight then approached Pwyll, and said thus to him: "O chief! I know not who thou art, and will not therefore bid thee a welcome."

"What, then," said Pwyll, "thou art, perhaps, of too high a rank to entitle me to that honour?"

"Truly," answered the other, "it is not any worthiness of my honour that deters me from the civility."

"Then, chief," replied Pwyll, "what other cause?"

"Heaven bear me witness," quoth the knight, "thy own ignorance, and thy want of courtesy."

"What discourtesy, chief, hast thou perceived in me?"

"I have never experienced greater incivility from any man," said the knight, "than driving away my dogs that had killed the stag, and setting

thy own pack upon him. That," added he, "was an insult; and though I may not avenge myself as to thee, I vow to heaven, I will cause thee disgrace, for which a hundred stags will not make amends."

"O chief!" said Pwyll, "if I have done thee an injury, I will purchase thy friendship."

"In what manner wilt thou purchase it?" inquired the other. "According as thy dignity," answered Pwyll; "but I know not who thou art." "I am a king," rejoined the other, "wearing a crown in the country whence I come." "Sir," said Pwyll, "I greet thee with a good day: and what country then dost thou come from?"

"From Annwn," answered the other; "I am Arawn\*, king of Annwn†."

\* *Arawn* may signify eloquence: in the Cambrian Register it is translated "the silvered tongued."

† The mythological region of *Annwn* deserves particular explanation. This term, in its most strict application, relates to the bardic theology; wherein it denotes, agreeably to its literal import, a privation of knowledge, being the contrast to *Gwynvyd*, or the intellectual world, by which the name happiness was defined. *Annwn* was the lowest point of animation, or the extreme of evil, in the circle of *Abred*, or metempsychosis, out of which the lapsed soul was imagined to re-ascend through all intermediate modes of existence, until it attained the human state, wherein ultimately it accumulated intel-

"Sir," said Pwyll, "by what means may I obtain thy friendship?"

ligence for enabling it to choose, and so to attach itself to good or to evil, as a free agent \*. If good preponderated in the choice, the soul escaped by death to a higher circle of being, wherein the memory was restored, so as to recognise the incidents and economy of every state of inferior life passed through; and though the soul progressively accumulated knowledge in the circle of felicity, and it merged into the intellectual circle of infinitude, to experience varied modes of existence eternally in approaching to the Deity; and as no finite being could, consistently with happiness, endure eternity without changing, this was a necessary condition. But if man was attached to evil, by death the soul again fell into a lower state of being, corresponding with its turpitude in the circle of necessity and evil; and again it transmigrated to the state of humanity. Thus the reprobate proceeded, so as ultimately to become attached to the good; and this state of good preponderating, it would consequently become universal among men, and then would this world end. So taught "the bards of the isle of Britain."

*Anwn*, in its more lax acceptation, as in the *Mabinogion*, is the unknown world, the invisible state, and fairy land. There is another Welsh term, very similar in sound, but differing in strict literal sense, yet not greatly so, as sometimes

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\* The fall into the lowest point of existence was termed *cwyp i had*, which literally is a lapse into seed; that is, into the seed of life, whence it again increased. This lower state was the hell of the bardic doctrine. *Had* has the exact sound of the Greek Hades, divested of its termination; and the Welsh term *Hêl*, is increment or accumulation, and *Hela* is to accumulate, to gather, also to hunt. This term is descriptive of the progress from the *Had*, or seed, in the circle of evil, or the Bardic hell, and it has precisely the same sound as the English word Hell. These are curious coincidences.



"This is the manner thou shalt obtain it," was the answer: "there is a person whose dominion borders upon mine, and who makes war upon me continually; he is called Havcan \*, also a king of Annwn: by freeing me from his attacks, which thou canst easily do, thou shalt obtain my friendship," &c.

used. This term is *Andwn*, the abyss, or bottomless pit, Tartarus. Thus the sun, on approaching to the winter solstice, is made to say:

*"I gogel awel gáuau  
I gwlad andwn dwyn yd av."*

"To shun the winter gale, to the region of the abyss profound I go."—*Dav. ab Gwilym*, 1350.

It should be remarked, that after his return from *Annwn*, the cognomen of *Pwyll Pentevig Dyved* is changed to *Pwyll pên Annwn*, or Pwyll, the head of the world unknown.

Mr. Davies, in his "Celtic Researches," p. 175, considers *Annwn* to imply "figuratively the condition of the dead, or the infernal regions, which comprehends the Elysium and the Tartarus of antiquity." And in support of this opinion, he quotes the proverb, "*Nid eir i annwn ond unwaith*:" there will be but one journey to hell; and likewise the common expressions, *Cwn Annwn*, hell-hounds; *Plant Annwn*, children of the deep, certain wandering spirits. The Irish are said to have anciently called their country by the name *Annun* or *Annan*.

\* Literally, summershine.

## SKETCH OF THE TALE OF BRAN.

BRAN, the son of Llyr, with his brothers, and the attendants of his court, are described as sitting on a large stone at Harlech \*, when they perceive

\* The vicinity of Harlech abounds in Druidical remains : At the ebb of the tide part of a great stone wall, four-and-twenty feet in thickness, may be seen, extending into the sea for about two-and-twenty miles in a serpentine manner, from the coast of Merionethshire, midway between Harlech and Barmouth. This extraordinary work is called Sarn Badrig, or St. Patrick's Causeway. Sarn Badrhwyg, or the Ship Breaking Causeway, remarks Pennant, it ought to be more properly called, from the numbers of ships lost on it. Its principal city is supposed to have been *Caer Wyddno*, or *Gwyddno's City*. *Gwyddno* flourished from about the year 460 to 520. He was surnamed *Garanhir*, and was father to *Elphin*, the patron of *Taliesin* the bard. At the end of Sarn Badrig are sixteen large stones, one of which is four yards in breadth. Sarn y Bwlch runs from a point N. W. of Harlech, and is supposed to meet the end of this. It appears at low water near the mouth of the *Dysynni*. The space between these formed, several centuries ago, a habitable hundred of Merionethshire, called *Cantref Gwaelod*, the lowland hundred. There appears little reason to doubt that these Sarns, or Causeways, were the work of art ; according to monkish legends, Sarn Badrig was miraculously formed by St. Patrick, to expedite his passage to Ireland. That this part of the sea was formerly dry land seems to be

thirteen ships steering towards them from the south of Ireland. They go down to the strand, and the ships offer tokens of peace. The Irish king, Maltholwç, is on board one of these ships; and he says, that he has made the voyage for the purpose of obtaining the hand of Bronwen\*, Llyr's daughter, and so create a union between the two islands. Bran invites him on shore, and Maltholwç lands. The next morning a council is held, when the Irish king's request is complied with, and he is married to Bronwen.

Bran's half brother Evnisien (the man of strife) becomes angry at not being consulted respecting this marriage, and, as an insult to Maltholwç, mutilates his horses by cutting off their ears and their lips close to the teeth. Intelligence of the insult is conveyed to Maltholwç, who immediately orders his ships to prepare for departure. Bran

well attested both by written and oral tradition. The catastrophe of its being deluged is recorded in a very old MS., written between the ninth and twelfth centuries, called the Black Book of Caermarthen (preserved in the Hengwrt collection), page 53. The inundation is believed to have happened about the year 500, owing to the negligence of a drunkard named Seithennin, who left the sluices of the embankment open. Vide *Welsh Archaeologia*, vol. ii. p. 64.

\* Bronwen means white bosom. In Jones's *Relics of the Bards*, p. 124, it is stated that the highest turret of Harlech Castle is called Bronwen's Tower.

demands the reason of his so doing, and expresses his regret at the insult which has been offered to him by Evnisien: he at length proposes not only to replace the horses, but also to give Maltholwç a bar of silver equal in compass and height to himself, and a plate of gold as large as his face. On these terms the matter is made up, and a banquet of reconciliation takes place.

At this feast the appearance of Maltholwç is pensive, instead of his usual gay manner. Bran makes a farther apology, and offers him, as an additional remuneration, a magic cauldron, into which any man who may be slain to-day shall, if thrown, be on the morrow as well as ever; but he shall not have the use of speech\*. The horses are given the next day, and in the evening there is another banquet, at which Maltholwç inquires of Bran where he had obtained this wonderful

\* Taliesin more than once, in his mysterious verses, speaks of magic cauldrons. In his poem of *Preiddeu Annwn*, the spoils of Annwn (translated the deep?), Welsh Archaiol. p. 45, he styles it the cauldron of the ruler of the deep, which first began to be warmed by the breast of nine damsels (the Gwilion). He describes it as having a ridge of pearls round the border:

“*Neu pair pen Annwnfn! Pwy y vynud?  
Gwrym am ei oror a mererid.*”

“Is not this the cauldron of the ruler of the deep? What is its quality, with the ridge of pearls round its border?” &c.

cauldron. Bran replies, that he believes it came from Ireland, and expresses his wonder that Maltholwç should be ignorant of its history. Maltholwç, thus reminded, says, that he remembers something of it ; for that, as he was one day hunting on a mountain above a lake in Erin, called the Lake of the Cauldron, he saw a hideous, gigantic, tawny man come out of the lake with a cauldron on his back, followed by a woman who was twice his size, being large with child. That he took them home with him ; but they were of so mischievous a nature, and so riotous, that, to get rid of them, he had recourse to the plan of forming an iron house, in which he induced them to live ; and having made them drunk, he had caused coals to be piled about it and blown into an ardent glow. The heat becoming white, and inconvenient to the inmates, the gigantic man put his shoulder to the side of the iron house, and forced it out ; his wife followed him, and they escaped from Ireland over to Wales.

Bran then says, that he received them kindly ; in gratitude they gave him the cauldron, and afterwards became excellent warriors.

After this conversation, Maltholwç and his thirteen ships depart for Ireland, taking with him his wife Bronwen. They are received with great joy in Ireland ; and a son is born, who is named

Gwern ab Maltholwç, and who is put out upon fosterage. The Irish, however, on learning the insult which had been offered to their king in Wales, become indignant. To mark their anger, they cut off all communication with that country, and insist on Maltholwç's putting away his wife Bronwen, and making her perform all menial offices. Bronwen, thus disgraced, rears a starling, whom she teaches to speak ; and having completed her tuition of the bird, ties a letter under its wings, with which it flies over to Wales. The bird at length contrives to discover Bran, "the blessed\*," alights on his shoulder, ruffles its wings, and discovers the letter. Bran immediately assembles his forces; a temporary government is formed, and with his host he proceeds to invade Ireland ; "where there were then only two rivers called Lli and Arçan †."

\* Bran was the father of Caradawg (Caractacus), and according to the Triads, he with all his family were carried to Rome, and remained there seven years as hostages for the son. Bran having met there with some Christians, and being converted, he prevailed on two Christians to accompany him to Britain, by which means the faith was introduced. Hence was the epithet "blessed" given to him.

† O'Flaherty's Ogygia, as well as Keating's History of Ireland, (which profound works may be considered of about equal historical value with the Mabinogion), record that, on the landing of Partholan, the first inhabitant of Ireland after

Some swineherds, who were on the sea shore,  
discover his approach, and go with all possible

the flood, there were three lakes, and ten rivers in that island ;  
which the old poem, beginning, " *ԶԵՅՆ ԼՇՈՒՆ ԲԻՐԻՔ ԵՐ  
ԲԼԱԾ,*" (Adam, the reverend sire of all our race), thus enu-  
merates :

" *ՈՒ ՍԱՐԻՍԵԱՐ ԼՇՈՒ ՈՒ ԼԻՆ,  
ԶԻ ԵՐԻՆ ԵՐ Ե ԸԵՐԻՆ,  
ԶԵՔ ԵՐԻ ԼՇՈՒ ԵՐԻՆ ԶԵՐԻ;  
ԶԻ ԵՐԻՔ ՏԻՐՇՈՒ ՏԵՐԻ-ԵԶԵՐԻ.  
ՏԵՐԻՐԵԱԶԻ ԶՈ ԲԵՐ ԵԶԵՐԻ,  
ԶԵՐԻՆ ՈՒ ԵՐԻ ՏԵՐԻ-ԼՇՈՒՆ;  
ԲԵՐԻ-ԼՇՈՒ ԵՐԻՐԻՔ ԵՐ ԶԵՐԻ,  
ԼՇՈՒ ԼՈՒՆԻՆ, ԼՇՈՒ ԲՈՐԵՐԵԱՆԻՆ.  
ԼԵՐԻ, ԵԶԻ, ԵԶԻՆ, ԵԶԻՆ ԵԶԻ,  
ՏԵՐԻ, ՏԵՐԻՔ, ՊՈՐԵՐԻ, ՊՈՐԻ,  
ԲԵՐԻ, ԵՐԻ Ե ԵԶԻՆԻ ԶՈ ԶԵՐ,  
ԵԶԻ ԵՐ ՈՒ ՏԵՐԻՐԵ.*"

" Nor lake expanded, nor a rapid stream  
Found they in Ireland, on their first arrival,  
Besides three lucid lakes of obscure fame,  
And ten bright streams of ancient high renown.  
In truth-declaring verse I'll now record  
The names of these three ancient, smooth, wide lakes ;  
Irrus, fair lake of soft expanded bosom ;  
Loch-lurgan, and Fordreman's lake.  
The Lee, the Bois, the Barrow bright, and Erne ;  
The Sligo fair, the Moarne, and the Moy ;  
The Finn, the Liffy, watering Leinster's plain,  
Are the fair rivers of high ancient fame."

Both Keating and O'Flaherty mention, in the course of  
their history, the bursting out of various other lakes and  
rivers in Ireland.

speed to Maltholwë, when the following dialogue takes place :

“ Sir,” they said, “ health to thee !”

“ Heaven grant you success !” was his reply ;  
“ and have you any news ?”

“ Sir, we have most wonderful news,” they said in answer ; “ we have certainly seen a wood on the sea, where we never beheld a single tree before.”

“ Truly, that is a strange thing,” said the king ;  
“ did you see any thing besides ?”

“ O yes ; we could perceive a great mountain by the side of the wood, sir,” they replied ; “ and that mountain was moving, and there was a very high ridge on the mountain, with a lake on each side of the ridge. The wood, the mountain, the whole seemed in motion.”

“ Well,” said the king, “ there is no body here who knows any thing of all this unless it be Bronwen ; inquire if she knows ?”

Thereupon messengers repaired to Bronwen.

“ Madam,” said they, “ what dost thou suppose those things can be ?”

“ The men of the Isle of the Mighty, who are coming over, from having heard of my affliction and disgrace.”

“ What can be the wood that was seen on the sea ?” said the messengers.



"The masts of ships, and their sail-yards," Bronwen replied.

"Mercy on us!" they cried; "but what was the mountain that was seen on one side of the ships?"

"That was Bran, my brother, coming into shallow water," she replied; "there was no ship that could contain him."

"But what could be that tremendous ridge, and the lake on each side of the ridge?"

"It is he surveying this island," said Bronwen: "he is full of wroth; his two eyes on either side of his nose, are what seem the two lakes on either side of the ridge."

The Irish warriors hold a council, and retreat over the river Llivon, breaking down all the bridges. Bran advances with his troops, but they find the river impassable.

"There is only this to be done," Bran replied, "that whosoever would be the top, let him be the bottom; I will be a bridge." And then was that saying first made use of, and still is it proverbial from that event.

Bran laid himself across the river, and hurdles being placed upon him, his troops pass over. A negotiation ensues; when Bronwen suggests, that a house should be built of sufficient size to contain Bran, who, as he never had one before large

enough for him, will feel the honour so great, that he will accede to a peace.

To proceed with a more rapid analysis of the tale. Only seven return from this expedition to Ireland, after having destroyed nearly all the people of the country. Bran is mortally wounded, and orders his companions who survive to carry his head to be interred in the White Hill in London, as a protection against all future invasions, so long as the head remained there. The sequel of the tale recites their progress to London to bury the head. At Harlech, in their way, they are kept seven years listening to the birds of Rhianon, singing in the air, and in Dyved (Dimetia), by attending to the last words of Bran, they stay in a grand hall for eighty years, enjoying every kind of pleasure; all their misfortunes, and the object of their further progress being kept out of their minds: but upon opening a door looking towards Cornwall, their real condition breaks in upon their memory, and they pursue their journey.

## MYTHOLOGICAL PERSONS:

THE following slight notice of a few of the characters mentioned in the Legends of Wales, although the list could readily be extended to some hundred names, may not be unacceptable to the reader. Druidical superstitions, which obscure the verses of Taliesin and Myrddin, tinge the complexion of many Welsh traditions. In their compositions, as in those of other early bards, frequent allusions are made to disembodied spirits and supernatural beings; whence proceeding, or how existing, we are not informed. These mythological personages seem to be completely wrapped up in mystery, and are presented to us by such partial and indistinct glimpses, that we can usually only perceive their existence, and rarely define their forms and attributes. Among these are three spectre bulls (*tri tharw Ellyll*) which, in the early

ages, greatly disturbed the tranquillity of the country. There were also the *Gwythaint*, or Birds of Wrath, which Taliesin, who wrote in the sixth century, informs us he saw; but he does not describe their appearance.

“ *Gwelais ymladd taer yn nant Francon\*  
Rhwng Wythaint a Gwydion,*”

I saw a fierce conflict in Nant Francon  
Between the birds of Wrath and Gwydion, &c.

“ It would be almost an endless task,” writes a gentleman evidently well acquainted with the subject, “ to enumerate all the ancient superstitions with which the early bards abound. Several of these have been entirely forgotten; obscure allusions to others exist in popular tales, and some have been handed down with very little change. Among the tales which have been preserved by tradition, those of the enchanter Merlin, the contemporary and friend of king Arthur, though certainly not of the age assigned to that chieftain, yet are of very considerable antiquity among the Welsh; and when com-

\* One of the valleys of Snowdon, between Capel Carrig and Bangor.

pared with the real history of that people, throw some light upon the origin of romantic fiction beyond what can be obtained from any other source. If in other countries we seek the earliest patterns of chivalry and romance, we can trace them from nation to nation, and from one age to another, until we arrive at Arthur and the Knights of the Round Table, but beyond him we cannot proceed. It will be found, that every nation of Christendom acknowledges Arthur and his warriors as the first and most perfect models of knighthood; Merlin, as the greatest and most powerful of magicians, and Wales and the British islands as the place of their birth. However they may have been disguised in the extravagant legends of the middle ages, these warriors were real personages in early Welsh history, as the following list will testify; though it would not be easy to account for their universal adoption as the heroes of romance throughout the rest of the world."

*Knights, &c. of Romance.*

Merlin the Enchanter.

Uther Pendragon.

King Arthur.

Queen Guenever.

*Warriors of the Bards.*

Merddin.

Uthyr Pendragon.

Arthur.

Gwenhwyfar.

<i>Knights, &amp;c. of Romance.</i>	<i>Warriors of the Bards.</i>
Medrod.	Medrawd.
King Urience.	Urien Rheged.
King Mark.	March ap Meirchion.
Sir Ewein son of king Urience.	Ewain ap Urien.
Sir Lamorac.	Llywarch Hên, Latinized into Lomachus, whose Welsh poems are still extant.
Sir Gawen.	Ywen ap Llywarch.
Sir Tristram.	Trystan ap Fallhwch.
Sir Carados Brisbras.	Caradawc fraich fras.
Sir Ilay.	Cai ap Cynir, &c.

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**ARIANROD** is a female, whose name implies silver-wheel. She was the daughter of Don, and the sister of Gwydion. Arianrod is a term often used for the galaxy; and *Caer Arianrod* is the constellation of the Northern Crown.

**CAWR**, the hero, in its popular signification, is a giant.

**DON**, is a chief. *Llys Don*, the court of Don, is the name of the constellation Cassiopeia.

**GWYDION**. His attributes point him out as identified with the Saxon Woden. The latter is traced as coming from the banks of the Don, and the former is styled *Gwydion ap Don*, or *Gwydion*, the son of Don, which signifies Son of the Wave; and hence it has been conjectured, that he ap-

plied his skill in astronomy to the purposes of navigation. *Caer Gwydion*, or the rampart of *Gwydion*, is the common term in Wales for the galaxy.

*GWENIDW* is a female who presides over the sea. The white breakers out at sea are called *Devaid Gwenidw*, or the sheep of *Gwenidw*. So in Ireland the Killarney boatmen term the waves "O'Donoghue's white horses." See vol. i. p. 324, second edition of this work.

*GWIDHAN* and *GWIDHANES*, a hag, a witch, a sorceress, a giantess.

" *Y drwg*

*Gwae dhynion vaint gwidhanes*

*Er diwynaw y cyvan !"*

" Evil—Woe to men the magnitude of such a hag to pollute the whole !" *Elis Wyn*, 1700.

*GWRACH* is also a hag. See account of *Gwrach y Rhibyn*, or the hag of dribble ; which legend, it should be stated, is confined to *Dimetia*, pages 186 and 206 in the first volume, second edition, of this work. It may here be remarked, that *Bun si* in Welsh, which is not unlike the Irish *Banshee*, signifies " the shrill-voiced damsel." *Gwrach y Rhibyn* comes at dusk, and pokes her shrivelled face to the window, and in a small shrill tenor and lengthened voice calls the person by

name who is shortly to die; as *Dei o baç*! Dear Dav-y!

GWYN AP NUDD, a mythological person, often mentioned by the ancient poets; Davydd ab Gwilym, in a poem composed 1346, makes him to be the king of fairy-land.

“ Among the extensive mountains about the junction of the counties of Brecon, Monmouth, and Glamorgan,” writes an intelligent but unknown correspondent, “ there is a considerable eminence, known by the name of *Gwyn ap Nudd*, generally corrupted into *Gwyneb y Nyth*, which, though nearly alike in sound, yet, as applied to a mountain, is absolutely unintelligible. The real name of the mountain seems derived from *Gwyn ap Nudd* (pronounced *Gwyr ap Neeth*), a mythological personage, well known in old British legends, as the king of those aerial beings who frequent the tops of mountains. It is likewise stated in the *Triads*, that there was in former times a real chieftain of this name, who was also a great astronomer, and ranked with *Gwydion* and *Idris*, as excelling in that science. *Gwydion* is the same with the combator of ‘ the Birds of Wrath ’ in *Snowdon*; and *Idris* gives his name to the mountain of *Cader Idris*, or the keep of *Idris*, in *Merionethshire*.

“ Concerning *Gwyn ap Nudd*, the following



ancient triplet is preserved among others of great age :

“ *Gwyn ap Nudd budd buddinawr*  
*Cynt i ryrthtai cadoedd rhag Carneddawr*  
*Dy fraich no brwyn briw i lawr.*”

Gwyr ap Neeth ! victorious warrior !  
 How fell the hosts before the dweller of the Cairn !  
 Thy arm, like rushes hew'd them down.

“ The word *Carneddawr* might be translated mountaineer; but if the first translation be correct, it must refer to the warrior buried under the Cairn; and therefore implies, that Gwyn ap Nudd was once a real person, though by some means or other, he has for many centuries been classed with the imaginary inhabitants of the hills.”

IDRIS, or EDRIS, is before mentioned as an astronomer. “ *Ἰδρῖς*, in Greek,” says Mr. Davies, in his Celtic Researches, “ implies an expert or skilful person, and *ידרש* (*Idresh*) in Hebrew, from *דרש* (*Dresh*), to seek, search, inquire diligently. *Hydres* has a similar meaning in Welsh.”

“ Not far from Dolgelleu, on the road to Machynlleth (pronounced Mahuntleth) are three large stones, in a pool of water or lake, *Lynn y tri Graiennyn*\*, or the lake of the three grains or

\* Mr. Davies, p. 174, Celtic Researches, expresses his opinion, that the word *Graiennyn* here comes from *Greian*, sun.

pebbles. The tradition concerning them is, that the giant Idris finding them rather troublesome in his shoe as he was walking, threw them down there." "Very troublesome," remarks the reasoning Mr. Roberts, in his *Cambrian Popular Antiquities*, "they are not to be supposed to have been to the giant, as they would only weigh a few tons! They are, however, large enough for a nursery computation of the giant's stature." p. 224.

M. de Gebelin, in his *Monde Primitif* (tom. iii. p. 392), observes, "that Enoch was known in the East under the name of Idris, or the Wise."

The Arabians say that he was a Sabean, and the first who wrote with a pen after Enos the son of Seth. See *Orient. Coll.* vol. ii. p. 112.

MOLL WALBEE, supposed to have been Maud of St. Waverley, or Maud de Haia, who built Hay Castle, and who was popularly termed *Malaen y Walfa*, or the Fury of the Enclosure.

Mr. Theophilus Jones, in his history of Brecknockshire, states, that "under the corrupted name of Moll Walbee, we have her castles on every eminence, and her feats are traditionally narrated in every parish. She built (say the gossips) the castle of Hay in one night; the stones for which she carried in her apron. While she was thus employed, a small pebble, of about nine

feet long and one thick, dropped into her shoe. This she did not at first regard, but in a short time finding it troublesome, threw it over the Wye into Llowes churchyard, in Radnorshire (about three miles off), where it remains to this day, precisely in the position it fell, a stubborn memorial of the historical fact, to the utter confusion of all sceptics and unbelievers."



## FAIRY LEGENDS OF WALES.

THE Fairies were the *Dynion Mwyn* \*, or kind people of the Mabinogion. They were also called *Y tylwyt teg*, the fair family, and in some parts of Wales, *Y Teulu*, the family, also *Bendith eu Mamau*, the blessings of their mothers; and *Gwreigedh Anwyl*, or dear wives.

The idea of the Fairies being diminutive is only current in Pembrokeshire and the adjoining districts, where they are called *Y dynon bach teg*, the small fair people. In the poems of the bards, and in the traditionary tales of the country, they had other names, such as *Elod* †, intelligences; and *Ellyllon*,

\* *Dēna Mah* (correctly written in Irish *Daíone Maith*) or good people, is in Welsh *Dynau mad*, and *Dynion mad* (*awyn*).

† *El-Elod*, an intelligence, a spirit, an angel, a fairy. The queen of the fairies is called *Tywyseoges yr Elod*.

goblins, or wandering spirits. The term *ellyll*\*, with its plural *ellyllon*, corresponds with the Hebrew *elil* and *elilim*. *Bwyd Ellyllon*, Elves' food, is the poisonous mushroom; *menyg ellyllon*, are the flowers of the foxglove. (*Llys Mawr*, great herb), and *Ceubren yr Ellyll*, the Elves' hollow tree †. The popular stories

\* *Ellyll* is the singular of *Ellyllen*.

“*Tri tarw Ellyll ynys Prydain: Ellyll Gwydawl, Ellyll Llyr Merini; ac Ellyll Gwrtmwl Gwledig.*” *Triads*.

The three bull Elves of the isle of Britain; the Elf *Gwydawl*; the Elf of *Llyr Merini*; and the Elf of *Gwrtmwl Gwledig*.

Bull Elves, in another Triad, has been rendered Stag Elves. And again, in the Triads we find,

The three Sylvan Elves of the isle of Britain. The prominent Elf, the yellow Elf, and the Elf of *Ednyvedawg* the Amorous.

Another Triad for *Melen* and *Melan*, yellow, has *Melw* as a different reading; *Banawg*, prominent, is also changed into *Manawg*, spotted. The meaning of both these Triads appears to have baffled the skill of commentators, who pronounce one to be as mysterious as the other.

† *Cruben yr Ellyll*, or the Elves hollow tree, so was popularly called a venerable oak which stood in the park of Sir Robert Vaughan at Nannau, not far from Dolgelleu. Its girth, according to Pennant, was 27 feet and a half. This tree is remarkable from the circumstance of the discovery of the bones of Howel Sele, the former proprietor of Nannau, who was supposed to have been murdered by the famous Owen Glyndwr, and concealed in it. The story of the murder is variously related; but many years after the mysterious disappearance of Howel Sele, the skeleton of a large man, such

of their friendly, and at the same time mischievous, intercourse with the inhabitants of Wales are endless. They are supposed to be the manes of the ancient Druids, suffered to remain in a middle state; not worthy of the felicity of heaven, but too good to associate with evil spirits, and therefore permitted to wander among men until the day of doom, when they are to be elevated to a higher state of being; hence the adage, "*Byw àr dir y tylwyth teg*," to live in the land of the fair family; that is, to subsist by unknown means. Though the fairies are generally represented as inoffensive, yet they sometimes discover a mischievous propensity in seizing an unwary traveller on the mountains, and giving him a trip through the region of air. See note on the story of Master and Man, in the first part of this work (p. 171, second edition), which is illustrated by a quotation from *Dav ab Gwilym*, a bard of the fourteenth century,

as Howel was known to have been, was found within the hollow trunk of *Cruben yr Ellyll*.

A sketch of this venerable tree was made by Sir Richard C. Hoare, the evening previous to its fall (13th July, 1813) from which the etching is taken.

who gives a very humorous account of his journey in a mist.

The fairies are believed to comb the beards of the goats on Friday night, which is said to be the reason for the shining and silky appearance of the beard on Saturday, "made decent for Sunday." When a person happens to find a piece of money, he will always find another in the same place so long as he keeps it a secret.

"In Wales, as in other pastoral districts," says a note on Mr. Llwyd's *Can y tybwyth teg*\*, "the Fairy Tales are not erased from the traditional tablet; and age seldom neglects to inform youth, that if, on retiring to rest, the hearth is made clean, the floor swept, and the pails left full of water, the fairies will come at midnight, continue their revels till day-break, sing the well-known strain of *Torriad y Dydd*, leave a piece of money upon the hob, and disappear.

"The suggestions of intellect and the precautions of prudence are easily discernible

\* Or Fairy Song, published in Thomson's *British Melodies*.

under this fiction : a safety from fire in the neatness of the hearth ; a provision for its extinction in replenished pails, and a motive to perseverance in the promised boon."

The fairies have concerts of delicious music upon calm summer nights, which mortals are often permitted to hear. They are also extremely fond of dancing in circles by the light of the moon, and are much addicted to the stealing of children, sometimes even enticing grown-up people away.

"In submitting stories illustrative of Welsh superstition," writes the lady who has collected them, "I cannot help expressing my surprise at finding so many labouring under delusions which seem inexplicable. Many of my old friends are highly respectable in their line of life, farmers and farmers' wives, of strict veracity on all other topics save supernatural agencies ; and they relate these stories with an earnestness and an air of truth that is perfectly confounding. Some have actually seen the fairies, and among this number is old Shane of Blaenllanby, in the vale of Neath. She says, "that several years ago she saw the fairies to the amount of



several hundreds. It was almost dusk, and they were not a quarter of a mile from her. They were very diminutive persons, riding four a-breast, and mounted upon small white horses, not bigger than dogs. They formed a long cavalcade, and passing on towards the mountain, at a place called Clwydau'r Banwen, they disappeared behind the high ground, and seemed to be traversing the Sarn, or ancient Roman road, which crosses that mountain.

“Many old people have told me,” continues the fair writer, “that when they were young, and had occasion to go to the mountains to look after sheep, or to fetch the cows, their parents always cautioned them to avoid treading near the fairies’ ring, or they would be lost.”

## THE STORY OF GITTO BACH,

AS RELATED BY SHONE TOMOS SHONE RHY-  
THERCH \*.

“ Don’t talk to me, you silly young things—  
don’t provoke an old man, now upwards of ninety  
years of age, by saying there were no fairies in  
Wales. If your great grandfather was alive, he

\* The lady to whom the compiler is indebted for the follow-  
ing collection of oral tales, in a letter dated 1st March, 1827,  
writes thus :

“ I have cut out from the Cambrian newspaper the death  
of Shone Tomos Shone Rhytherch, alias John Jones, alias  
‘ Cobbler Jig,’ as he was commonly called by the country-  
people here, which was a great affront to him. I never saw  
the poor old man after he related to me his stories : he was  
one of the most entertaining persons I ever met with, and to  
those who understood Welsh, he was certainly a great treat.

“ On Wednesday, the 31st ult. at Ty-yn-y-Craig, near  
Aberpergwm, in the vale of Neath, John Jones, better known  
by the name of ‘ Cobler Jig,’ at the advanced age of 91. He  
was a native of Llewel, in Breconshire, and when a young  
man lived as servant at Ynis-y-gerwn, and was distantly re-  
lated to the late Mrs. Gwyn, of Pant-y-Corrid, in that county.  
For the last twenty years he has resided in the vale of Neath,  
and has chiefly supported himself by cobbling, and occasionally

would confirm every word of what I say. 'Tis of what I saw, I speak, and will speak, while I have breath. I tell you that fairies were to be seen in the days of my youth by the thousand, and I have seen them myself a hundred times. Indeed, when I was a boy, it was dangerous to leave children in their cradles, without some one to watch them ; so common was it for the fairies to steal them away.

“There was poor Howel, Merodydd Shone Morgan's family \* ; what trouble they had when they

gardening. The eccentricity of his character, and his jocular disposition, together with his advanced age, had rendered him a great favourite among the respectable families in the neighbourhood ; and what is remarkable, although daily working at his trade of mending shoes, his eye-sight was so good that he never wore spectacles. At his request, his remains were taken to Croynant Chapel for interment, where his wife was buried about twenty years ago. Rees Williams, Esq. of Aberpergwm, very kindly sent a number of his workmen to assist in carrying his remains to their last home, a distance of seven miles.”

\* The peasants in Wales generally add their father's Christian name to their own, and sometimes their grandfather's, and even their great grandfather's, and so on, until at last their names become almost interminable. Pennant relates, “ that Thomas ap Richard ap Howel ap Jevan Vychan, lord of Mostyn, and his brother Piers, founder of the family of Trelace, were the first who abridged their name in Wales ; and that on the following occasion : Rowland Lee, bishop of Lichfield, and president of the marches of Wales, in the reign

lived on the Rhos \*, in the Creinant, when Gitto Bach † was stolen away. Gitto was a fine boy, and would often ramble alone to the top of the mountain to look at his father's sheep; and when he returned, he would show his brothers and sisters a number of pieces, the size of crowns, with letters stamped upon them, and resembling them exactly, only that they were made of a peculiarly white paper. When asked where he had found them, he would say, 'The little children with whom I play on the mountain give them me:' he always called them the little children.

"At length, one day, poor little Gitto was missing. The whole neighbourhood was in a commotion. Search was made; but no little Gitto was heard of: two years elapsed, and the still desponding mother received no other intelligence, than in fresh cause of alarm for the safety of her other children.

of Henry VIII., sat at one of the courts on a Welsh cause, and, wearied with the quantity of "aps" in the jury, directed that the pannel should assume their last name, or that of their residence; and that Thomas ap Richard ap Howel ap Jevan Vychan should for the future be reduced to the poor dissyllable Mostyn; no doubt to the great mortification of many an ancient line."—Vol. i. p. 18. 8vo ed. 1810.

\* A plain. The Creinant is a small secluded village in the mountains, consisting of a few scattered houses.

† *Gitto* is an abbreviation of Griffith; *bach* signifies little, like the Irish *beg*.

For they took to wandering on the mountains, and from one or two excursions they had returned with coins resembling those which had been given to Gitto previous to his disappearance; whereupon the family became doubly vigilant in watching these children, and the cottage-door was cautiously secured with bars and bolts. One morning, as the mother opened the door, what should she see but little Gitto sitting on the threshold, with a bundle under his arm? He was the very same size, and apparently the same age, and dressed in the same little ragged dress, as on the day of his departure from the Rhos.

“ ‘ My child ! ’ said the astonished and delighted mother, ‘ where have you been this long, long while ? ’

“ ‘ Mother,’ said Gitto, ‘ I have not been long away ; it was but yesterday that I was with you. Look what pretty clothes I have in this bundle, given to me yesterday by the little children on the mountain, for dancing with them while they played on their harps.’

“ The mother opened the bundle ; it contained a dress of very white paper, without seam or sewing. She very prudently burnt it immediately, having ascertained that it was given him by the fairies.

“ This extraordinary occurrence,” continued the narrator, “ interested me much, and made me more

anxious than ever to see the fairies; and as I was walking one evening with my companion Davidd Rhys, near Pant Owns, above the Dinas Rock, we met a gipsy, and conversed with her. I expressed to her my great desire to see the fairies.'

" ' Ah, Shone! ' said she, ' it is not to every one it is given to see the *good people*; but I have the power, and can dispense it to you, if you follow my directions. Go and find a clover with four leaves \* (*meillionen pedair ddalen*), and bring

\* Many superstitions in Ireland are attached to a four-leaved shamrock. The lucky finder of one is believed, by means of it, to acquire the power of seeing airy beings, and things invisible to other eyes—of causing all doors, however strongly barred and bolted, to fly open at will, &c. The old Welsh poem called Kadeir Taliesin (Welsh Archol. p. 37), or the Chair of Taliesin, the obscurity of which is supposed to be a detailed account of mystic Druidical rites, contains, among other ingredients,

" *Ag urddawl segyrffyg*  
*A llyun meddyg*  
*Lle allwyr venffyg.*"

" And the honoured segyrffyg, and medical plants from an exercised spot."

" Segyrffug," says Mr. Davis, in his *Mythology of the British Druids*, p. 277, " means, protecting from illusion;" he imagines it to be the name of some plant, and adds, that " the populace of Wales ascribe the virtue implied by this name to a species of trefoil." Four white trefoils are said to have instantly sprung up wherever *Olwen* trod upon the ground.—See Owen's *Cam. Blog*.

nine grains of wheat, and put them on this leaf, in this book ;' handing me a book which she took out of her pocket.

"I did as the gipsy told me.—' Now,' said she, ' Shone, meet me by moonlight to-morrow night on the top of Craig y Dinas\*.'—I did so. She took a phial, and washed my eyes with its contents ; and as soon as I opened my eyes, I saw at a short distance thousands of little people all in white, dancing in a circle to the sound of at least a score of harps. After dancing for some time, they left the circle, and formed a line on the brow of the hill ; the one next the precipice squatted down, clasped her hands under her knees, and tumbled, tumbled, tumbled, head-over-heels, head-over-heels, all the way down the hill ; the rest all following her example, until they were lost in the dark wood of the valley beneath.

" After this adventure, I was in the habit of seeing them continually. And you, Morgan Gwillim (Morgan was sitting in an arm-chair opposite the narrator), in your younger days, you saw the fairies as well as I.

" Oh, that I 'll swear to, although I never took an oath in my life," replied Morgan. " I have seen

\* An etching of Craig y Dinas, from an original sketch, is annexed.







From a sketch by A. D. Ingham.

### CRAIG Y DINAS.

Published Decr 1st 1887 by L. Wemyss, London.

them on the Varteg\*, and by Cylepsta Waterfall †, and by Sewyd yr Rhyd, in Cwm Pergwm ‡; and I once saw them, and I never saw them to such perfection, as when I stood between the cascade and the rock §, over which it fell; I could at that moment see them distinctly glittering in all the colours of the rainbow, and hear their music softly blending with the murmur of the waterfall. After enjoying themselves here for some time, they all proceeded into a small cave ||, which they had made in the rock, where they seemed to be exceedingly amused, laughing, and having a great deal of merriment: then they ascended the rock, and frisked away; the sound of their melodious harps dying away among the mountains, whither they

\* Properly called Kil Hepsta.

† A beautiful waterfall.

‡ Sewyd yr Rhyd is a waterfall in the grounds of W. Williams, Esq. Aberpergwn, Vale of Neath, where the fairies are said to bathe.

§ The valleys in the neighbourhood of Pontneathvaughan abound with waterfalls, several of which are of considerable height, and surrounded by the most romantic scenery. In some instances the rock, over which the water is projected, so overhangs its base as to admit of a road being made between it and the waterfall.

|| The cave, thus attributed to the industry of the fairies, is still to be seen in Cwm Pergwm.

had fled; and the last strain I heard sounded something like this :



but the falling cadence I could not catch for the life of me, it was so faint."

Morgan added, that his wife, Shone, had often seen them with their white mantles\*, and sometimes they were to be seen bearing each other's trains. Indeed she saw them so often, that she at last took no notice of them.

\* "*Cyolw eiry gorwyn gorwydd hynt.*"

"Of the same hue as the extremely white snow of the front of the declivity."

## LLEWELLYN'S DANCE,

AS TOLD BY DAVIDD SHONE\*.

"ABOUT seventy years ago, there were two farmer's servants living at Llwyn y Ffynon: I knew them both well. They were returning from their work one fine evening at twilight, and driving their little mountain ponies before them, weary with having toiled all day, carrying lime for their master's use. When they came down into a smooth plain, one of the men, named Rhys ap Morgan, suddenly halted.

" ' Stop,' said he to his companion, Llewellyn, ' do stop, and listen to that enchanting music; that's a tune I've danced to a hundred times. I cannot resist it now. Go, follow the horses; I must find out the musicians, and have my dance;

\* It is almost needless to point out the similarity between this and the Scotch tradition, related from Stewart, in the Brother Grimm's Essay, at p. 16 of this volume. There is an ancient Welsh ballad called " The Old Man of the Wood," in which like *The Adventures of Porsenna*, alluded to in the first volume of this work, at p. 303, second edition, years roll away as moments.

and if I don't overtake you before you reach home, take the panniers off the horses. I'll be with you presently.

" 'Music in such a spot !' replied Llewellyn, ' in such a lonely place ! what can you be dreaming of ? I hear no music ; and how should you ? Come, come, no nonsense ; come home with me.'

" He might have spared himself the trouble of this remonstrance, for away went Rhys ap Morgan, leaving Llewellyn to pursue his homeward journey alone. He arrived safely, untacked the little horses, completed his day's work by despatching an ample supper, and was retiring to rest without any anxiety about his companion, Rhys, who, he supposed in his own mind, had made this music a pretence to go to the alehouse, which was five miles off. For, reasoned Llewellyn to himself, how could there be the sound of music in that lonely spot, remote from any dwelling ?

" The next morning, when he found that Rhys was still missing, he reluctantly told their master that he must have assistance to attend the horses, for that Rhys was not yet returned. This alarmed the farmer and his family, for Rhys was a very steady fellow, and had never before played the truant, although he was notoriously fond of dancing. Llewellyn was questioned and cross-examined as to where he had parted from him,

and how, and why, and all about it; but to no one could he give what was considered to be a satisfactory answer. He said that music had allured him, and that he had left him to join the dancers.

“ ‘ Did you hear the music?’ inquired his master.

“ Llewellyn replied that he had not; whereupon it was resolved that the alehouse should be searched, and that he should be sought for everywhere. But it was all to no purpose; no information was received of him; there had been no dance in the whole country round; not a sound of music had met the ear of any one; and, in fine, not the slightest trace of the lost servant could be made out.

“ At length, after a strict but fruitless inquiry, suspicion fell on Llewellyn. It was supposed by some that he must have quarrelled with Rhys on their way home, and perhaps had murdered him. Llewellyn thus accused, was taken up and confined on suspicion. He vehemently protested his innocence, although he could give no clear account of the affair; and things remained thus for a year, when a farmer in the neighbourhood, who had some experience in fairy customs, shrewdly suspected how the matter stood, and suggested, that he and several others should accompany Llewellyn Walter to the very spot, and

at the very same time where he said that he had parted from Rhys ap Morgan. This proposition was agreed to, and when they arrived at the spot, which was green as the mountain-ash. (*Cerdia*), Llewellyn stopped.

“ ‘This is the very spot,’ said he, ‘and, hush ! I hear music ; melodious harps I hear.’ ”

“ We all listened, for I was one of them ; but we heard nothing. ‘ Put your foot on mine, Davidd,’ said Llewellyn, whose foot was at that moment upon the outward edge of the fairy circle. I did so, and all the party did the same in succession, and we all instantly heard the sound of many harps in full concert, and saw, within a circle of twenty feet in diameter, countless numbers of little figures, the size of children of three or four years old, enjoying themselves vastly. They were going round and round the ring with hands joined. I did not perceive any varied figures in their dance ; but as they were going round, we saw Rhys ap Morgan among them. ”

“ Llewellyn at once seized hold of his smock frock, and twitched him out of the circle, taking great care himself not to overstep the edge of their ring ; for once you are inside it, you lose all power over yourself, and become their property. ”

“ ‘Where are the horses ? where are the horses ?’ said Rhys impatiently. ‘ Where are the horses ; ”

indeed !' said Llewellyn, ' where have you been ? Come, answer for yourself, and account for your conduct. Clear my character, which your absence has cast the reproach of murder upon.'

" 'What stuff you talk, Llewellyn ! go, follow the horses, my good fellow, while I finish my dance ; for I have not yet been above five minutes dancing. I never enjoyed a dance like this ; oh let me return to the dance,' said Rhys.

" 'Five minutes,' repeated the enraged Llewellyn. ' You must explain the cause of your absence for this whole year. This foolish talk of yours about five minutes won't answer for me ; so, come you must.'

" He took him by main force. To all our questions he could say nothing, but that he had only been absent from the horses five minutes, and that he was dancing very pleasantly ; but of the people with whom he was he could give no account whatever ; they were strangers to him, he said. He could answer no questions as to what he had eaten, or where he had slept, or who had clothed him ; for he was in the same dress as when he disappeared, and he seemed in a very desponding way ; he became, ' sad, sullen, and silent,' and soon took to his bed, when he died.

" And," continued the narrator of the tale, " the morning after we had found Rhys, we went



to examine the scene of this extraordinary adventure, and we found the edge of the ring quite red, as if trodden down, and I could see the marks of little heels, the size of my thumb-nails." He repeatedly compared the size of the heels to his thumb nail.

## THE EGG-SHELL DINNER,

AS RELATED BY DAVIDD TOMOS BOWEN.

“My mother lived in the immediate neighbourhood of a farm-house that was positively infested with fairies. It was one of those old-fashioned houses among the hills, constructed after the manner of ancient days, when farmers considered the safety and comfort of their cattle as much as that of their children and domestics; and the kitchen and cow-house were on the same floor, adjoining each other, with a half door, over which the good man could see the animals from his own chimney-corner without moving.

“My mother and the farmer’s wife were intimate friends, and she used often to complain to her, that the fairies annoyed her and her family to that degree that they had no peace; that whenever the family dined, or supped, or ate any meal, or were sitting quietly together, these mischievous little beings would assemble in the next apartment. For instance, when they were sitting in the kitchen, they were at high gambols in the dairy; or when they were yoking the cows, they would see the

fairies in the kitchen, dancing, and laughing, and provokingly merry.

“ One day as there were a great number of reapers partaking of a harvest-dinner, which was prepared with great care and nicety by the housewife, when they were all seated round the table, they heard music, and dancing, and laughing above ; and a shower of dust fell down, and covered all the victuals which were upon the table. The pudding, in particular, was completely spoiled, and the keen appetites of the party were most provokingly disappointed. Just at this moment of trouble and despair, an old woman entered, who saw the confusion, and heard the whole affair explained. ‘ Well,’ said she, in a whisper to the farmer’s wife, ‘ I’ll tell you how to get rid of the fairies ; to-morrow morning ask six of the reapers to dinner, and be sure that you let the fairies hear you ask them. Then make no more pudding than will go into an egg-shell, and put it down to boil. It may be a scanty meal for six hungry reapers, but it will be quite sufficient to banish the fairies ; and if you follow the directions you will not be troubled with them any more.’

“ She did accordingly, and when the fairies heard that a pudding for six reapers was boiling in an egg-shell, there was a great noise in the next apartment, and an angry voice called out :

“ ‘ We have lived long in this world ; we were born just after the earth was made, but before the acorn was planted, and yet we never saw a harvest-dinner prepared in an egg-shell. Something must be wrong in this house, and we will no longer stop under its roof.’

“ From that time the rioting, and music, and dancing ceased ; and the fairies never were seen or heard there any more \*.”

\* The absurd circumstance of boiling a supper for six hungry men in an egg-shell will doubtless recall to the reader’s memory the tale of the Brewery of Egg-shells, in the first volume of this work ; where a changeling is betrayed into a similar exclamation of astonishment, and instantly disappears.

## STORIES OF MORGAN RHYS HARRIS.

THE last time the fairies were seen among the hills in the vicinity of Neath was about ten years since, by Morgan Rhys Harris, an old man, who related the following account of it to his landlord, a very respectable farmer, who lives about seven miles from Aberpergwm, and who has now repeated it exactly as it was told to him. He says, the old man told it with such an appearance of truth, and that he was always so correct in every thing he said, that for his part he does not doubt the truth of his narration :

“ Morgan Rhys Harris rented two farms ; the one he lived at, and the other he held in hand, and farmed himself. In old times the farmers had kilns close by their houses, to bake their oats and their barley ; and the house I am speaking of had this appendage. Morgan Rhys Harris was going down a hill, which led to the farm, when he heard the most delightful music. He stopped, and still he heard this music ; he advanced, and he heard it plainer still \*.

\* The compiler preserves this sentence as he received it, although its punning construction renders the precise meaning questionable.

“ At a little distance before him, in the direct path which he had to cross, and near the kiln, he saw numberless little beings all dancing. Various were the figures and changes of the dance ; some advancing, others retreating, and others as if they were dancing reels. The old man paused, and hesitated whether he should return, or what course he should pursue ; he feared to pass them, lest he should put his foot on fairy ground, and lose possession of himself ; so he made a circuit, and reached the barn near the kiln. There he sheltered himself inside the door, and from this place he watched their movements for an hour. He distinctly saw them ; and he learned the tune which they played, and would have taught it to me, if I had had an ear for music. This old man only died two years ago. I wish you had seen him, for he really was one who spoke the truth, and you might have relied on every word he said.”

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AN old woman in the neighbourhood of Aberpergwn states, that her father often saw the fairies on horseback in the air, on little white horses ; but that he never saw them descend ; that he heard their music in the air ; and that she heard of a

man who had been twenty-five years with the fairies, and who, when he returned, thought he had only been five minutes away. She added, that those who have once been with the fairies never looked afterwards like other people; and that her own son, when a baby, looked so sadly, that her neighbours all thought, and used to tell her, that he was exchanged by the fairies.

## FAIRY MONEY,

GIVEN TO DAVIDD SHONE'S MOTHER.

“ My mother, once upon a time, was in the habit of receiving money from the fairies ; and near our house there was a well, and near it a green spot, celebrated for being the scene of many fairy exploits. Whenever my mother went to the well, she would find upon the stone, above the water-spout, a new half guinea. Once I was bargaining about a pig, and my mother, to prevent farther contention, brought her little bag of gold forward, and gave me a new half guinea. I was frightened when I saw a poor woman like my mother possessed of so much money, and I entreated she would tell me how she came by it. ‘ Honestly,’ said she ; I remember the very word.

“ ‘ Oh, mother !’ said I, ‘ tell me where you got it ; to whom would you trust your secret, if you do not confide in your only son ?’

“ ‘ Well, if I must, I must,’ said my mother. She then told me, and most unfortune, poor woman, for her was the disclosure ; for from that



moment the donation ceased. Often did she attend the well ; but, alas ! in vain. Not a farthing did she find from that time."

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DAVIDD TOMOS BOWEN knew a farmer who was much annoyed by the fairies ; they frequented the brook that ran by his house, and so mischievous were they, that their greatest amusement was to take the clay from the bottom of the brook, and make little round balls, the size of marbles, with which they played ; but that he never could discover what game it was. The water used to be so muddy in consequence of this, that the cattle could not drink of the stream ; and when he would mutter a complaint against them for such conduct, they would always repeat his expressions with derision, and laugh, and frisk away. A girl in the neighbourhood used to assist them in making these clay-balls, for which, in return, she received quantities of money, and became a very rich woman, and went away to London, where she married a grand gentleman.

## THE KNOCKERS.

“ A VERY good-natured, fortunate sort of beings, whose business it is to point out, by a peculiar kind of bumping, a rich vein of metal ore, or any other subterraneous treasure. They are highly respected, and are deemed nearly allied to the fairies.”—*Roberts's Cambrian Popular Antiquities.*

## THE PWCCA.

THE Welsh Pwcca is evidently the same as the English Puck, and is known in some parts of the principality by the name of Bwcci. In Breconshire a whole glen bears his name, Cwm Pwcca; and it is traditionally said, that from this spot Shakspeare drew some of his materials for the *Midsummer Night's Dream*, through the medium of his friend Richard, the son of Sir John Price of the priory of Brecon.

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### CWM PWCCA.

CWM PWCCA, or the Pwcca's Valley, forms part of the deep and romantic glen of the Clydach, which, before the establishment of the iron-works of Messrs. Frere and Powell, was one of the most secluded spots in Wales, and therefore well calculated for the haunt of goblins and fairies. But the bustle of a manufactory has now in a great measure scared these beings away; and of late it

is very rarely that any of its former inhabitants, the Pwccas, are seen. Such, however, is the attachment to their ancient haunt, that they have not entirely deserted it; as there was lately living near this valley a man who used to assert that he had seen one, and had a narrow escape of losing his life, through the maliciousness of the goblin. As he was one night returning home over the mountain from his work, he perceived at some distance before him a light, which seemed to proceed from a candle in a lantern, and upon looking more attentively, he saw what he took to be a human figure carrying it, which he concluded to be one of his neighbours likewise returning from his work. As he perceived that the figure was going the same way with himself, he quickened his pace in order that he might overtake him, and have the benefit of his light to descend the steep and rocky path which led into the valley; but he rather wondered that such a short person as appeared to carry the lantern should be able to walk so fast. However, he redoubled his exertions, determined to come up with him; and although he had some misgivings that he was not going along the usual track, yet he thought that the man with the lantern must know better than himself, and he followed the direction taken by him without farther hesitation. Having, by dint of hard walking,

overtaken him, he suddenly found himself on the brink of one of the tremendous precipices of Cwm Pwcca, down which another step would have carried him headlong into the roaring torrent beneath. And, to complete his consternation, at the very instant he stopped, the little fellow with the lantern made a spring right across the glen to the opposite side, and there, holding up the light above his head, turned round and uttered with all his might a loud and most malicious laugh ; upon which he blew out his candle, and disappeared up the opposite hill \*.

\* A Welsh peasant, well acquainted with Cwm Pwcca and its supernatural inhabitants, was requested to describe their form ; he accordingly made a sketch, of which this wood-cut is a reduced fac-simile.



## YANTO'S CHASE.

SOME years ago, there lived among the hills a man named Evan Shone Watkin, commonly known as *Yanto'r Coetcae* (*Yanto* or *Ianto* being the familiar term for Evan). It happened that this Evan was once invited to the house of a friend, on the borders of Glamorganshire, with several other relatives and neighbours, to celebrate a christening; and, as is usual on such occasions, the evening was passed with much conviviality. They drank the strongest ale—they quaffed the best old mead\*—they sang *Pennilion*† to the harp; and it

\* Mead, called also Metheglin, is a liquor manufactured from honey. Queen Elizabeth is said to have been particularly fond of it, and to have annually imported a large quantity for her private drinking from Wales. A receipt for the manufacture, from an ancient Welsh manuscript, may be found in that useful and clever compilation, Nicholson's *Cambrian Traveller's Guide*, second edition, 1813, p. 63.

† *Pennili* is explained by Dr. Owen Pughe, in his *Welsh Dictionary*, to mean, generally, “a prime division or part,” and, applied to poetry, “a stanza, strophe, or epigram.” Hence *pennilion* are properly epigrammatic stanzas, probably of bardic invention, when writing was little practised, with a view to preserving the wit and wisdom of their age; and intended as an agreeable exercise for the memory. The custom

was near midnight before Evan Shone recollected that he had a great way to return home. As he had urgent business to require his attendance at his own house early the next morning, he determined upon departing; and the better to qualify him for his journey, he plied the ale-cup with double diligence. Remembering the old adage, that a spur in the head is worth two on the heel, he took a parting draught of mead, and then set off for his home over the mountains of Carno\*.

of pennillion singing has been the means of handing down verses of remote antiquity. Pennant appears, generally speaking, to be in error when he compares the Welsh pennillion-singer to the improvisatori of Italy; as extemporaneous composition, although sometimes used, is far from being considered as constituting excellence, and has been objected to. When two singers strive in rivalry, the art consists in producing pennili apposite to the last sung, without repeating the same stanza twice; for this is regarded as a defeat. The subjects of the verses are humorous, satirical, or monitory, at the will of the singer; and parishes have been known to contend against parishes in this amusement. Although the custom is on the decline, persons may still be found who can recite from memory some hundred of these stanzas, and with them accompany the harp through various tunes and transitions with wonderful tact. Of late an attempt has been made by the Cymrodorion Society to revive and patronize pennillion singing. For some curious particulars on this subject see Mr. E. Jones's "Relics of the Bards," p. 60. et seq.

\* On these mountains, in the year 728, a battle was fought between Ethelbald, king of Mercia, and Rodrick Moelwynoc, the Welsh prince.

He had travelled some time, and proceeded a considerable way along the hills, when he thought he could hear at a great distance some sounds resembling music, nearly in the direction he was going. And as he advanced, Evan Shone found himself approaching these sounds so near, that he could plainly distinguish them to proceed from a harp, and some voices singing to it. He could even make out the tune, which was that of *Ar hŷd y nŷs* \*; but the night being dark, and the mist lying thick around him, he could not discover the persons who were thus amusing themselves. As he knew there was no house within a great di-

\* "Of all the Welsh airs," says Mr. John Parry, in a communication on Welsh music, to the *Cambro-Briton*, vol. i. (1820) p. 95, "that of *Ar hŷd y nŷs*, or The Live-long Night, is the most popular in England, partly owing to its own beauty, and partly to the pathetic words, which were written to it (by Mrs. Opie, I believe), commencing

' Here, beneath a willow, sleepeth  
Poor Mary Anne."

There is scarcely a composer who has not written variations on this melody, particularly for the harp. And lately Liston, the actor, has introduced a comic parody on it, which he sings, riding on an ass; and wherein the simple burthen of the original is burlesqued into, "Ah! hide your nose." In Wales it is considered by the prize-singers as a mere bagatelle, and generally introduced as the last strain at convivial meetings, when extempore stanzas are sung to it alternately by the company.



stance of that spot, his curiosity was greatly excited by what he heard ; and the music still continuing, and seemingly but a short distance from the path, he thought there could be no harm in deviating a little out of his way, in order to see what was going forward. He, moreover, thought it would be a pity to pass so near such a merry party without stopping for a few minutes with them to partake their mirth. Accordingly he made an oblique cut in the direction of the music, and having gone full as far as the place from which he at first imagined the sounds proceeded, he was a little surprised to find that they were still at some distance from him. However, he very philosophically explained this to himself, by recollecting that sounds are heard at a much greater distance by night than by day, and as he had gone so far from his road, he was determined to discover the cause ; but, somehow or other, the more he walked the less the probability seemed of his arriving at his object. Sometimes the sounds would recede from him, and then he would quicken his pace lest he should lose them entirely ; and through the darkness of the night, he more than once tumbled up to his neck in a turf bog. When he had struggled out, and got upon his legs again, he would form a resolution to give up the chase ; but just at that moment he would hear the sounds more lively and encouraging than ever, and not

unfrequently his exertions would be stimulated by hearing his own name called—"Evan! Evan!"

This being the most respectful mode of addressing him, he concluded, that whoever they were he was in pursuit of, they must be well-bred people, and on that account he was the more desirous of joining them. At other times, as he followed, he would hear himself called by his less dignified appellation of "Yanto! Yanto!" which, though not so flattering to him as the other, he concluded must come from some intimate friend, and therefore the familiarity was excusable. Like the music, these salutations were sometimes so indistinct, that he could not always exactly distinguish whether or not they proceeded from the grouse or the lap-wings, which he was continually disturbing among the heather.

At length, chagrined and mortified at his repeated disappointments, and excessively fatigued, he was determined to lie down on the ground till morning; but he had scarcely laid himself down, when the harp struck up again more brilliantly than ever, and seemed so near, that he could even distinguish the words of the song. Upon this he started up, and commenced another chase, and again went through the same routine of tumbling into bogs, wading knee-deep through swamps, and scratching his legs in labouring through the

heather, till both his patience and his strength had almost deserted him. But before he was quite exhausted, what was his joy when he perceived, at a small distance before him, a number of lights, which, on a nearer approach, he found to proceed from a house, in which there appeared to be a large company assembled, enjoying a similar merry-making to the one he had left, with music and with drink, and other good cheer? At such a sight, he mustered up all his energies, walked in, sat himself down by the fire, and called for a cup of ale. But before the ale arrived, or he had time to make many observations on the persons about him, excepting that the people of the house were in a great bustle with attending on their guests, and every thing bore the marks of high conviviality, such was the effect of the fatigue he had undergone, and of the ale and mead he had before drank, that he fell fast asleep.

No doubt he slept long and soundly, for he was awoke the next morning by the sun-beams playing on his face. On opening his eyes, and looking around him, judge his astonishment at finding himself quite alone, and not a vestige remaining of what he had positively seen when he was going to sleep. Both the house and the company had completely vanished; and instead of being comfortably seated by a good fire, he found

himself almost frozen with cold, and lying on a bare rock, on the point of one of the loftiest crags of Darren y Killai, a thousand feet in height, down a good part of which poor Yanto would have tumbled perpendicularly, had he moved but a foot or two more in that direction.

## THE ADVENTURE OF ELIDURUS.

*(From Geraldus Cambrensis.)*

“ A SHORT time before our days, a circumstance worthy of note occurred in those parts (near Neath) which Elidurus, a priest, most strenuously affirmed had befallen himself. When a youth of twelve years, in order to avoid the society of his preceptor, he ran away, and concealed himself under the hollow bank of a river; and after fasting in that situation for two days, two little men of pigmy stature appeared to him, and said, ‘ If you will go with us, we will lead you to a country full of delights and sports.’ Assenting, and rising up, he followed his guides, through a path at first subterraneous and dark, into a most beautiful country, but obscure, and not illuminated with the full light of the sun. All the days were cloudy, and the nights extremely dark. The boy was brought before the king, and introduced to him in the presence of his court, when, having examined him for

a long time, he delivered him to his son, who was then a boy. These men were of the smallest stature, but very well proportioned, fair complexioned, and wore long hair. They had horses and greyhounds adapted to their size. They neither ate flesh nor fish, but lived on milk diet, made up into messes with saffron.

“As often as they returned from our hemisphere they reprobated our ambitious infidelities and inconstancies; and though they had no form of public worship, were, it seems, strict lovers and reverers of truth.

“The boy frequently returned to our hemisphere by the way he had gone, sometimes by others, at first in company, and afterwards alone, and made himself known only to his mother, to whom he described what he had seen. Being desired by her to bring her a present of gold, with which that country abounded, he stole, whilst at play with the king's son, a golden ball, with which he used to divert himself, and brought it in haste to his mother; but not unpursued, for as he entered the house of his father, he stumbled at the threshold; he let the ball fall; and two pigmies seizing it, departed, showing the boy every mark of contempt and derision. Notwithstanding every attempt for the space of a year, he never could find again the track to the subterraneous passage.

He had made himself acquainted with their language, which was very conformable to the Greek idiom. When they asked for water, they said, *Udor udorem*. When they want salt, they say, *Halgein udorem* \*."

\* On this specimen of Fairy language, Mr. Roberts, in his *Cambrian Popular Antiquities*, p.195, builds an ingenious theory respecting the fairies ; at least so far as accounting for their appearance and habits.

## STORIES OF FAIRIES,

*From " A Relation of Apparitions of Spirits in the  
County of Monmouth, and the Principality of  
Wales."*

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This little book was written by the late Reverend Edmund  
Jones of the Tranch.

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" W. E. of Hafodafel, going a journey upon the Brecon mountain, very early in the morning passed by the perfect likeness of a coal-race, where really there was none : there he saw many people very busy, some cutting the coal, some carrying it to fill the sacks, some raising the loads upon the horses' backs, &c. This was the agency of the fairies upon his visive faculty ; and it was a wonderful extra-natural thing, and made a considerable impression upon his mind. He was of undoubted veracity, a great man in the world, and above telling an untruth. The power of spirits, both good and bad, is very great, not having the



weight of bodies to encumber and hinder their agility.

“ W. L. M. told me, that, going upon an errand by night from the house of Jane Edmund of *Abertillery*, he heard like the voice of many persons speaking one to the other at some distance from him. He again listened attentively; then he heard like the falling of a tree, which seemed to break other trees as it fell: he then heard a weak voice, like the voice of a person in pain and misery, which frightened him much, and prevented him from proceeding on his journey. Those were fairies which spoke in his hearing, and they doubtless spoke about his death, and imitated the moan which he made when some time after he fell from off a tree, which proved his death. This account, previous to his death, he gave me himself. He was a man much alienated from the life of God, though surrounded with the means of knowledge and grace; but there was no cause to question the veracity of his relation.

“ *The Parish of Bedwellty*.—From under the hand of the Rev. Mr. Roger Rogers, born and bred in this parish, I have the following remarkable relation: A very remarkable and odd sight was seen in July 1760, acknowledged and confessed by

several credible eye-witnesses of the same, i. e. by Lewis Thomas Jenkin's two daughters, virtuous and good young women (their father a good man, and substantial freeholder), his man-servant, his maid-servant, Elizabeth David, a neighbour and tenant of the said Lewis Thomas, and Edmund Roger, a neighbour, who were all making hay in a field called *Y Weirglod Fawr Dafalog*. The first sight they saw was the resemblance of an innumerable flock of sheep over a hill called *Cefen Rhychdir*, opposite the place where the spectators stood, about a quarter of a mile distant from them. Soon after they saw them go up to a place called *Cefen Rhychdir ucha*, about half a mile distant from them; and then they went out of their sight, as if they vanished in the air. About half an hour before sunset they saw them all again; but all did not see them in the same manner; they saw them in different forms. Two of these persons saw them like sheep; some saw them like greyhounds; some like swine, and some like naked infants: they appeared in the shade of the mountain between them and the sun. The first sight was as if they rose up out of the earth. This was a notable appearance of the fairies, seen by credible witnesses. The sons of infidelity are very unreasonable not to believe the testimonies of so many witnesses of the being of spirits.

“E. T. travelling by night over *Bedwellty* mountain, towards the valley of *Ebwy Fawr*, where his house and estate were, within the parish of *Aberystroth*, saw the fairies on each side of him, some dancing. He also heard the sound of a bugle horn, like persons hunting. He then began to be afraid ; but recollecting his having heard,—that if any person should happen to see any fairies, if they draw out their knife, they will vanish directly ; he did so, and he saw them no more. This the old gentleman seriously related to me. He was a sober man, and of such strict veracity, that I heard him confess a truth against himself, when he was like to suffer loss for an imprudent step ; and though he was persuaded by some not to do it, yet he would persist in telling the truth, though it was to his own hurt.

“ *The Parish of Llanhyddel*.—Rees John Rosser, born at *Hen-dy*, in this parish, a very religious young man, on going very early in the morning to feed the oxen at a barn called *Ysgybor y lann*, and having fed the oxen, he lay himself upon the hay to rest. While he lay there, he heard like the sound of music coming near the barn : presently a large company came in the barn, with striped clothes, some appearing more gay than others, and there danced at their music. He lay

there as quiet as he could, thinking they would not see him, but in vain ; for one of them, a woman, appearing better than the rest, brought him a striped cushion, with four tassels, one at each corner of it, to put under his head. After some time, the cock crew at the house of *Blaen y coome* hard by ; upon which they appeared as if they were either surprised or displeased ; the cushion was then hastily taken from under his head, and they went away.

“ This young woman’s grandfather, William Jenkins, for some time kept a school at *Trefethin* church, and coming home late in the evening used to see the fairies under an oak, within two or three fields from the church, between that and *Newynidd* bridge. And one time he went to see the ground about the oak, and there was a reddish circle upon the grass, such as have been often seen under the female oak, called *Brenhin-bren* (King-tree), wherein they danced. He was more apt to see them on Friday evenings than any other day of the week. Some say, in this country, that Friday is apt to differ often from the rest of the week with respect to the weather. That, when the rest of the days of the week are fair, Friday is apt to be rainy or cloudy, and when the weather is foul Friday is apt to be more fair. If there is any thing

in it, I believe it must be with large and frequent exceptions, which yet may possibly consist with some measure of reality in the matter ; but of this I am no judge, having neglected to make observations of the matter.

“ I am now going to relate one of the most extraordinary apparitions that ever was communicated to me, either by word of mouth, or by letter, which I received from the hand of a pious young gentleman of Denbighshire, then at school, who was an eye-witness of it :

“ ‘ REV. SIR, *March 24th, 1772.*

“ ‘ Concerning the apparition I saw, I shall relate it as well as I can in all its particulars. As far as I can remember, it was in the year 1757, in a summer’s day about noon, I, with three others, one of which was a sister of mine, and the other two were sisters ; we were playing in a field called *Kae-kaled*, in the parish of *Bodvâry*, in the county of *Denbigh*, near the stile which is next *Lanekwyd* house, where we perceived a company of dancers in the middle of the field, about seventy yards from us. We could not tell their numbers, because of the swiftness of their motions, which seemed to be after the manner of morris-dancers (something uncommonly wild in their motions) ; but after

looking some time, we came to guess that their number might be about fifteen or sixteen. They were clothed in red, like soldiers, with red handkerchiefs, spotted with yellow, about their heads. They seemed to be a little bigger than we, but of a dwarfish appearance. Upon this we reasoned together what they might be, whence they came, and what they were about. Presently we saw one of them coming away from the company in a running pace. Upon this, we began to be afraid, and ran to the stile. Barbara Jones went over the stile first, next her sister, next to that my sister, and last of all myself. While I was creeping up the stile, my sister staying to help me, I looked back and saw him just by me; upon which I cried out; my sister also cried out, and took hold of me under her arm to draw me over; and when my feet were just come over, I still crying and looking back, we saw him reaching after me, leaning on the stile, but did not come over. Away we ran towards the house, called the people out, and went trembling towards the place, which might be about one hundred and fifty yards off the house; but though we came so soon to see, yet we could see nothing of them. He who came near us had a grim countenance, a wild and somewhat fierce look. He came towards us in a slow running pace,

but with long steps for a little one. His complexion was copper-coloured, which might be significative of his disposition and condition ; for they were not good, but therefore bad spirits. The red, of their cruelty—the black, of their sin and misery ; and he looked rather old than young.

‘ The dress, the form, the colour, and the size  
Of these, dear sir, did me surprise.  
The open view of them we had all four.  
Their sudden flight, and seeing them no more,  
Do still confirm the wonder more and more.’

“ Thus far Mr. E. W.—’s letter.

“ P. W. who lived at the Ship, in *Pont y Pool*, and born also in *Trefethin* parish, an honest, virtuous woman, when a young girl going to school, one time seeing the fairies dancing in a pleasant dry place under a crab-tree, and seeing them like children much of her own size, and hearing a small pleasant music among them, went to them, and was induced to dance with them ; and she brought them unto an empty barn to dance. This she did, at times, both going and coming from school, for three or four years. Though she danced so often with them, yet she could never hear the sound of their feet ; therefore she took off her

shoes, that she might not make a noise with her feet, which she thought was displeasing unto them. Some in the house observing her without shoes, said, this girl walks without shoes to school ; but she did not tell them of her adventure with the fairies. They all had blue and green aprons on. They were of a small stature, and appeared rather old."



## LEGENDS OF LAKES.

### THE LEGEND OF LLYN CWM LLWCH.

IN the county of Brecon there is a lofty range of mountains, called in Welsh *Bannau Brecheiniog*, and in English the Brecon Becons, forming part of that chain which runs through the greatest part of South Wales, and is generally known by the name of the Black Mountains. *Pen y Van*, the principal peak, is considered the highest of this range, being nearly three thousand feet, and when seen with its attendant points from the north of the town of Brecon, forms a magnificent feature in the landscape. Immediately at the foot of the precipice of *Pen y Van*, and almost surrounded by very lofty rocks, is an extraordinary crater-shaped pool called *Llyn Cwm Lluch*, about two hundred yards wide, and of unknown depth, concerning which many superstitious tales are repeated by the country people:—and it certainly must be allowed that it would be difficult to find a spot better calculated to produce superstitious impressions, being far removed from any habita-

tion, and even far out of sight of any cultivated land; overhung by rugged and frowning precipices, often rendered more fearfully indefinite by the clouds and mists floating over them, or curling down their sides; the hoarse croak of the raven, too, as he sails among the crags, adds in effect to the rugged grandeur of the scene.

Of the various stories related of this pool, the following seems the most generally known, and is related exactly as told by an old man who resided at no great distance from it.

“Several years ago, for some cause or other, the inhabitants of the neighbourhood formed a plan of draining Llyn Cwm Llŵch, for what purpose is not now known, whether from curiosity to see what was at the bottom of it, or with an idea of finding some treasure there. However, having formed the resolution, they assembled at the lake one day in considerable numbers, with spades and pickaxes, and commenced their operations with such vigour that in a few hours they dug a trench thirty yards in depth, the remains of which may still be seen. Having worked very hard for several hours, they at last approached so near the water of the pool, that it seemed as if another blow of the pickaxe would complete the undertaking by breaking through the remainder of the bank, and letting out the water. But just as this blow was going

to be performed—just as the pickaxe was lifted up to give the finishing stroke—a flash of lightning was seen, which averted the blow—the sky became black, a loud peal of thunder rolled among the mountains, waking their hundred echoes ; and all the workmen ran from the trench, and stood in awe upon the brink of the pool. As the sound of the thunder died away, a sort of ripple was perceived on the face of the water, and then the centre of the pool became violently agitated.—From this boiling eddy was seen to arise a figure of gigantic stature, whose hair and beard were three yards in length. Having arisen nearly half out of the water, he addressed the workmen : he told them to desist from their purpose, or else they would drown the town of Brecon and all the country of the Vale of Usk. He concluded by saying, ‘ *Cofiwch arwydd y gath,*’ (remember the token of the cat), and then disappeared in the water, amidst a most tremendous storm of thunder and lightning.

“ When the wonder and fear had a little subsided, the people began to discuss the matter together, and could perfectly understand the warning, and comprehend every thing he had said but the concluding sentence, which they were much perplexed about.

“ On this difficult point an old man came for-

ward, Tomos Shone Rhytherch (an ancestor of the narrator of the tale), and said that he could explain the meaning of the words; and he accordingly told them, that when he was a boy he had heard a tradition, that a woman who lived in a cottage among the Van mountains had a cat which was very troublesome, and she determined upon destroying it. For that purpose, a lad who followed the occupation of a shepherd upon those hills took the cat with him one morning in order to drown it in Llyn Cwm Llwh. Having arrived there he took off his garter, and with it he tied a large stone to the cat's neck, and then he threw her into the pool. The cat of course immediately sunk out of sight, the sides of the pool being very precipitous. Shortly after there was seen a cat precisely of the same description in a fishing boat upon the lake of *Llyn sa faddan*, ten miles off, having a garter about her neck precisely the same with the one which the lad had thrown into Llyn Cwm Llwh. Therefore it is concluded that there is a connexion between this pool and the large lake of *Llyn sa faddan*, and though the pool is but small, yet if attempted to be drained, the lake of *Llyn sa faddan* would assist its little relative, and avenge the injury by discharging its vast body of water over the whole of the adjacent country."

## THE LEGEND OF MEDDYGON MYDDVAI.

*From the Cambro-Briton, vol. ii. p. 313.*

A MAN, who lived in the farm-house called Esgairllaethdy, in the parish of Myddavi, in Caermarthenshire, having bought some lambs in a neighbouring fair, led them to graze near *Llyn y van Vach* in the Black Mountains. Whenever he visited the lambs, three most beautiful female figures presented themselves to him from the lake, and often made excursions on the boundaries of it. For some time he pursued and endeavoured to catch them, but always failed ; for the enchanting nymphs ran before him, and, when they had reached the lake, they tauntingly exclaimed,

“ *Cras dy fara*  
*Anhawdd etn dala,*”

which, with a little circumlocution, means, “ For thee, who eatest baked bread, it is difficult to catch us.”

One day some moist bread from the lake came to shore. The farmer devoured it with great avidity, and on the following day he was successful in his pursuit, and caught the fair damsels.

After a little conversation with them, he commanded courage sufficient to make proposals of marriage to one of them. She consented to accept him on the condition that he would distinguish her from her two sisters on the following day. This was a new and a very great difficulty to the young farmer ; for the fair nymphs were so similar in form and features, that he could scarcely perceive any difference between them. He observed, however, a trifling singularity in the strapping of her sandal, by which he recognised her the following day. Some, indeed, who relate this legend, say, that this lady of the lake hinted in a private conversation with her swain, that upon the day of trial she would place herself between her two sisters, and that she would turn her right foot a little to the right, and that by this means he might distinguish her from her sisters. Whatever were the means, the end was secured ; he selected her, and she immediately left the lake, and accompanied him to the farm. Before she quitted, she summoned to attend her from the lake seven cows, two oxen, and one bull.

This lady engaged to live with him until such time as he would strike her three times without cause. For some years they lived together in comfort, and she bore him three sons, who were the celebrated Meddygon Myddvai.

One day, when preparing for a fair in the neighbourhood, he desired her to go to the field for his horse: she said she would; but being rather dilatory, he said to her humorously, "Dos, dos, dos," i. e. "go, go, go," and he slightly touched her arm *three times* with his glove.

As she now deemed the terms of her marriage broken, she immediately departed, and summoned with her her seven cows, her two oxen, and the bull. The oxen were at that very time ploughing in the field, but they immediately obeyed her call, and took the plough with them. The furrow from the field in which they were ploughing to the margin of the lake is to be seen in several parts of that country to the present day.

After her departure, she once met her two sons in a *cwm* \*, now called *Cwm Meddygon*, and delivered to each of them a bag containing some articles which are unknown, but which are supposed to have been some discoveries in medicine.

The Meddygon Myddvai were Rhiwallon, and his sons, Cadwgan, Gruffydd, and Einiow. They were the chief physicians of their age, and they wrote about A. D. 1230. A copy of their works is in the Welsh school library in Gray's Inn-lane.

\* A dale or valley; hence the English word combe, as in Wycombe, Ilfracombe, &c.

THE ISLAND OF THE FAIR FAMILY.

(From "*The Mythology and Rites of the British Druids*. By Edward Davies, Author of *Celtic Researches*. London, 8vo. Booth.—1809)."

In the mountains near Brecknock there is a small lake, to which tradition assigns some of the properties of the fabulous Avernus. I recollect a mabinogi, or mythological tale, respecting this piece of water, which seems to imply that it had once a floating raft; for here is no island.

In ancient times, it is said, a door in a rock near this lake was found open upon a certain day every year: I think it was May-day. Those who had the curiosity and resolution to enter were conducted by a secret passage, which terminated in a small island in the centre of the lake. Here the visitors were surprised with the prospect of a most enchanting garden, stored with the choicest fruits and flowers, and inhabited by the *Tylwyth Teg*, or fair family, a kind of fairies, whose beauty could be equalled only by the courtesy and affability which they exhibited to those who pleased them. They gathered fruit and flowers for each



of their guests, entertained them with the most exquisite music, disclosed to them many events of futurity, and invited them to stay as long as they should find their situation agreeable. But the island was sacred, and nothing of its produce must be carried away.

The whole of this scene was invisible to those who stood without the margin of the lake. Only an indistinct mass was seen in the middle: and it was observed that no bird would fly over the water, and that a soft strain of music at times breathed with rapturous sweetness in the breeze of the mountain.

It happened, upon one of these annual visits, that a sacrilegious wretch, when he was about to leave the garden, put a flower with which he had been presented into his pocket; but the theft boded him no good. As soon as he had touched unhallowed ground, the flower vanished, and he lost his senses.

“Of this injury the fair family took no notice at the time. They dismissed their guests with their accustomed courtesy, and the door was closed as usual: but their resentment ran high. For though, as the tale goes, the *Tylwyth Teg* and their garden undoubtedly occupy the spot to this day, though the birds still keep at a respectful distance from the lake, and some broken strains of music

are still heard at times, yet the door which led to the island has never re-appeared; and from the date of this sacrilegious act the Cymry have been unfortunate."

It is added, that "sometime after this, an adventurous person attempted to draw off the water in order to discover its contents, when a terrific form arose from the midst of the lake, commanding him to desist, or otherwise he would drown the country.

"I have endeavoured," says Mr. Davies, "to render this tale tolerable, by compressing its language, without altering or adding to its circumstances. Its connexion with British mythology may be inferred from a passage of Taliesin, where he says that the deluge was presaged by the Druid, who earnestly attended in the ethereal temple of Geirionydd to the songs that were chanted by the *Gwyllion* \*, children of the evening, in the bosoms of lakes."

\* Frequent allusions are made in early Welsh poems to the *Gwyllion*, which term has been generally understood to mean shades or ghosts of departed men, who were allowed to inhabit this world, and sometimes appeared in a visible state.

" *Seith gwaw gowanon*  
*Seith loneid afon*  
*O gwael Cinreinion*  
*Y dylanwon.*

*Seith again haelion  
A aethant yn Gwyllion  
Yn hoed Celiddon  
Y' darfuant."*

Merddin, 580.

"Seven battles of the spear  
Seven rivers full of blood of leading warriors  
Shall fill up.  
Seven score heroes have become  
Wandering phantoms: in the woods of Caledonia  
They came to their end."

Again:—

*"Cad Gwyllion Davydd da gyrchiad."*

Ll. P. Moch, 1240.

"The battle shades of David of good onset."

Gwendyd thus addresses her brother Merddin in his fit of frenzy:—

*"Cân cthyr dy Pwyl cân Gwyllion mynyd  
A thy hun yn agro  
Pwy gwledych gwedi Iago?"*

"Since thy reason is gone with the gloomy shades of the mountain, and thou thyself despairing, who sways the realm after Iago?"

The compiler avails himself of this opportunity to correct what he has said respecting the word Gwyll in the 1st part of this work (2d Ed. p. 247, and quoted at page 11 of this volume); although the explanations he has given of the word are correct, he was wrong in comparing it with the Irish Phooka. The Welsh name for this spirit is *Mwca* or *Pwcca*, which means, formed of smoke, from *Mwg*—smoke.

## THE HEADLESS LADY.

Cwm Rhyd y Rhesg is a dark and gloomy dingle in Glamorganshire. A bridge crosses a wild ravine, which is overhung with trees ; and the murmuring of the streamlet among rocks, or the rustling of the breeze among leaves, are the only sounds which disturb the solitude of this romantic dell. Here it is that the Headless Lady is said to wander every alternate sixty years ; being absent for sixty years, and then returning, to the great terror of the neighbouring district. She is seen in the dusk of the evening ; and the present year (1827) is part of her term of appearance.

Many stories of this appalling spectre are related by the peasantry. Some say the most death-like chill freezes their blood at beholding her, although she has never been known to molest any one, but tranquilly wanders along. Others, that their very clothes seem to freeze around them and become stiff ; and that they are deprived of utterance or motion. The following tale is given as related by the parties concerned ; and so far as relates to the alarm of the girl, and her account of the matter, is certainly no fiction. Ever since the occurrence she has been called *Mary'r Elor* \*.

\* Elor is the Welsh for bier.

About ten years ago, as Mary Lewis was going through Cwm Pergwm, on her way to Blaen-pergwm farm, near the bridge called Pont Rhyd y Rhesg, there appeared before her a female figure, dressed in white, and without a head, which, although it seemed to approach her, never came nearer. Retreat was useless, for every retrograde step she took, the headless figure kept pace with her: she therefore determined on going forward; but the lady preceded her, and always kept in full view about two yards in advance of poor Mary. She describes this frightful object as about five feet in height, and having in every respect, with the exception of the head, a complete and beautiful female form. Her dress was snow white, and a mantle of dazzling purity fell over her shoulders in Vandyke points\*. The figure made no sign or motion whatever to Mary; but accompanied her to within six paces of the farmhouse, and then vanished.

As soon as the poor girl gained the threshold she fainted away; and every time she revived, and endeavoured to explain the cause of her alarm, and describe the spectre, the very recollection terrified

\* In the neighbourhood of Pont neath vaughan, there is also seen an apparition resembling a woman without a head; and having the part of her dress which comes round the throat cut into Vandykes, called in Welsh *Cam rhedymen*, or the Crook of the fern.

her into hysteric fits. She remained in this state for two days, at the end of which time she appeared lifeless from exhaustion. The good woman of the house thought she was actually dead, and sent for her relatives, who brought a bier to take her home. A procession followed the bier to Mary's house ; and when they were going to lay her out, she showed symptoms of returning animation, and by slow degrees recovered, when she related the above account of the appearance of the Headless Lady.

## OWEN LAWGOCH'S CASTLE.

IN one of the most secluded parts of the principality may be seen the ruins of an ancient fortress, called "Castell Owen Lawgoch," from the name of the chieftain, Owen Lawgoch, or Owen of the Bloody Hand, by whom it was once occupied, and who is believed to be at this moment, together with all his warriors, in a state of enchanted sleep in the vaults under the castle\*; and in confirmation of this belief, the following story

\* A peasant, according to Waldron, ventured to explore the vaults and passages under Castle Rushin, in the Isle of Man. After wandering from one apartment to another, he arrived at a hall, into which he looked before he ventured to enter. He there beheld "a vast table in the middle of the room, of black marble, and on it extended at full length, a man, or rather monster; for by his account he could not be less than fourteen feet long, and ten round the body. This prodigious fabric lay as if sleeping on a book, with a sword by him, of a size answerable to the hand supposed to make use of it."

He is terrified at the sight, and returns without disturbing the giant.

was related by Thomas ap Rhys as having occurred not many years ago :

“ It happened that as a Welshman was one day sauntering among the ruins of Castle Owen Lawgoch, he discovered an opening which seemed to lead to some subterraneous passage. Having removed the obstructions caused by the ivy and the rubbish about the entrance, he managed to creep in. To his surprise he found that this passage led to others of considerable length, and curiosity induced him to explore further, until he suddenly came into a vaulted hall of vast extent, in which he beheld an immense multitude of warriors clad in armour, lying upon their arms fast asleep. This unexpected sight completely checked his curiosity; and, quite satisfied that he had proceeded far enough, he hastened to return before his intrusion should be discovered: but as he turned himself round to depart rather incautiously, he unfortunately struck his foot against something which he did not perceive in the dim light, but which seemed to consist of arms piled up together, and they fell with a tremendous clang; whereupon all the warriors started up from their sleep, and grasping their arms, exclaimed ‘*A ydyw hi ’n ddydd? a ydyw hi ’n ddydd?*’ (Is it day? Is it day?); but the intruder, with the most admirable



presence of mind, answered '*Nagyw, naggw, cysgwoch etto,*' ('No, no, sleep again;') when they all immediately laid themselves down, and fell fast asleep as before, where they still are, waiting the signal which is to awaken them \*."

Another legend says, that it is in a cavern under a hill that the chieftain, Owen Lawgoch, with his thousand warriors, lie in a state of enchanted sleep, waiting for the time to arrive when they are to be awakened in order to oppose a hostile army which they shall meet at the ford of *Rhyd goch arddy faych*, and at *Llyn pent y Weryd*; and that the destinies of Britain depend on the valour and success of the awakened warriors †.

\* Frederick Barbarossa, according to German tradition, as has been mentioned in a note on the Giant's Stairs, in the 2d part of this work, sits within the Kyffhäuser, leaning on a stone table, into which his long beard has grown, waiting until the day arrives when he is to hang up his shield upon a withered tree, which will immediately put forth leaves, and happier days will then begin their course.—See also note on Barry of Cairn Thierna, in the same volume.

† "In ages of romance, a romantic immortality has been bestowed by popular loyalty on those heroes who commanded the admiration as well as the fondness of their countrymen. Those who had seen their king flushed with victory and leading on his warriors, or enthroned in majesty and wisdom, were almost reluctant to admit that he too could die."

"Greece revered her yet living Achilles in the White Island; the Britons expected the awakening of Arthur, entranced in Avelon; and almost in our days it was thought

This hill is said to be the scene of a very extraordinary appearance, concerning which, an old man of the neighbourhood related the following story :

“Whoever stands at the distance of a mile or two from the hill may perceive upon its summit a fine large yew tree; but should you attempt to approach the spot, you will find that the yew tree has vanished. If you retreat again to a short distance, you will plainly see the tree as before.

“It happened that a shepherd lad being one day upon this hill, wanted a walking-stick, and perceiving a hazle tree near him, he cut it for that purpose. In a short time afterwards he became tired of his pastoral occupation, and he resolved upon leaving home, and seeking his fortune in some other line of life. He set out accordingly, and as he was journeying on he met a stranger of noble appearance, who looked very earnestly at him, and at the hazle stick which he had in his

that Sebastian of Portugal would one day return and claim his usurped realms. Thus also the three founders of the Helvetic confederacy are thought to sleep in a cavern near the lake of Lucerne. The herdsmen call them the three Tella, and say that they lie there in their antique garb in quiet slumber; and when Switzerland is in her utmost need they will awaken and regain the liberties of the land.”

*Quarterly Review*, No. xlv. for March, 1820, p. 371.

hand. At length he spoke to him and said, 'Young man, where did you get that stick? Can you show me the very spot?'

" 'I can, sir,' replied the poor Welsh boy.

" 'And will you?' inquired the stranger in an earnest manner.

" 'Most readily would I,' said the boy, 'if I was near it.'

" 'The stranger then offered to pay all the expenses of the journey, and to reward him for his trouble. The boy agreed to the proposal, and they accordingly set off together and arrived at the very root of the tree. The boy then stopped and said, 'This, sir, is the root of the hazle stick which I hold in my hand.' The stranger then desired him to look under it, and that he would find a trap-door which would admit him into a vaulted passage; that this passage would lead him into an apartment in which numbers of armed warriors lay asleep, and that at its entrance he would find a rope conducting him to it: 'but,' said he, 'press gently on this rope, for it is attached to a bell, which, if rung, will arouse the warriors and their chieftain; who, if he be awakened, will ask, Is it day?' Should this be the case, mind and answer quickly 'No!' 'In this apartment,' he continued, 'there is a vast

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"No, No, sleep again."

quantity of gold, concealed under a pile of arms ; and this gold I want you to bring away. Be cautious, and remember what I have told you.'

"The lad, after some little hesitation, obeyed : he found the trap-door, descended, and arrived at the apartment described by his companion. There he beheld the warriors lying on their arms asleep ; and near the chieftain was the pile of arms which concealed the heap of gold. The intrepid lad approached to seize it, and was in the very act, when down fell the arms with a fearful clang, and up started Owen Lawgoch, who stretched out his hand, which was as large as a shield, and cried out with a voice that pealed like thunder, '*A ydyw hi 'n ddydd? a ydyw hi 'n ddydd?*' (Is it day? is it day?); whereupon all the armed men were aroused, and reiterated the same question. The young Welshman with great coolness replied, '*Nagyw, nagyw, cysgwch etto;*' (No, no, sleep again); when they all composed themselves to sleep again.

"The lad then secured as much gold as he could carry, and returned with it to the entrance of the cavern, where he delivered it to the stranger, who desired him to descend again and bring up the remainder, promising him a handsome share of it. Upon this second attempt, he found neither rope nor hall, nor warriors nor treasure ; and after much

toil and fear, he found his way back to the trap-door ; but his companion had fled for ever, and he never even heard of him afterwards."

The cavern, like the yew tree on the mountain, has ever since been in a state of *Dygel* (invisibility), and no one from that time has disturbed the enchanted sleep of Owen Lawgoch and his steel-clad warriors.

## CWN ANNWN;

### OR, THE DOGS OF HELL\*.

(From "*A Relation of Apparitions*," &c. by the  
Rev. Edmund Jones.)

BEFORE the light of the gospel prevailed, there were, in *Caermarthenshire* and elsewhere, often heard before burials, what by some were called

\* "I interrogated Davidd Shone," says the lady from whose inquiries the compiler has derived so much assistance, "respecting the various signs he had witnessed preceding death. He seems to be quite experienced in them, and well acquainted with every description; he has himself heard and seen more than most people. He has heard the *Kyhirracth* (groans) and the *Cwn Annwn* † (little dogs that howl in the air with a wild sort of lamentation): one of them, he says, fell on a tombstone once, but no one ever found him. He has also heard a little bird called *Aderin y Corff*, which chirps at the door of the person who is to die, and makes a noise that resembles in Welsh the word 'come, come.' Who ever is thus called must attend the summons."

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† The word *Annwn* has been before explained; see page 180.



*Cwn Annwn* (Dogs of Hell), by others *Cwn bendith eu Mammau* (Dogs of the Fairies), and by some *Cwn-wybir* (Sky-dogs). The nearer they were to man, the less their voice was, like that of small beetles ; and the farther, the louder, and sometimes like the voice of a great hound sounding among them, like that of a bloodhound, “ a deep, hollow voice.”

As Thomas Andrews was coming towards home one night with some persons with him, he heard as he thought the sound of hunting. He was afraid it was some person hunting the sheep, so he hastened on to meet, and hinder them : he heard them coming towards him, though he saw them not. When they came near him, their voices were but small, but increasing as they went from him ; they went down the steep towards the river *Ebwy*, dividing between this parish and *Mynyddaslwyn* ; whereby he knew they were what are called *Cwn-wybir* (Sky-dogs), but in the inward part of Wales *Cwn Annwn* (Dogs of Hell). I have heard say that these spiritual hunting-dogs have been heard to pass by the eves of several houses before the death of some one in the family. Thomas Andrews was an honest, religious man, who would not have told an untruth either for fear or for favour.

One Thomas Phillips, of *Treleck* parish, heard those spiritual dogs, and the great dog sounding among them ; and they went in a way which no corpse used to go ; at which he wondered, as he knew they used to go only in the way in which the corpse was to go. Not long after, a woman, who came from another parish, that died at *Treleck*, was carried that way to her own parish-church to be buried, in the way in which those spiritual dogs seemed to hunt.

An acquaintance of mine, a man perfectly firm to tell the truth, being out at night, heard a hunting in the air, and as if they overtook something which they hunted after ; and being overtaken made a miserable cry among them, and seemed to escape ; but overtaken again, made the same dismal cry, and again escaped, and followed after till out of hearing.

Mr. D. W. of *Pembrokeshire*, a religious man, and far from fear or superstition, gave me the following account : That as he was travelling by himself through a field called the *Cot Moor*, where two stones are set up, called the *Devil's Nags*, at some distance from each other, where evil spirits are said to haunt, and trouble passengers ; he was thrown over the hedge, and was never well after-

wards. Mr. W. went with a strong, fighting, mastiff dog with him ; but suddenly he saw another mastiff dog coming towards him. He thought to set his own dog at it, but his dog seemed to be much frightened, and would not go near it. Mr. W. then stooped down to take up a stone, thinking to throw at it ; but suddenly there came a fire round it, so that he could perceive it had a white tail, and a white snip down his nose, and saw his teeth grinning at him ; he then knew it was one of the infernal Dogs of Hell ; one of those kind of dogs against which David prayeth in *Psalm xxii.* v, 20. " Deliver my soul from the power of the dog."

As R. A. was going to *Langharn* town one evening on some business, it being late, her mother dissuaded her from going, telling her it was late, and that she would be benighted ; likely she might be terrified by an apparition, which was both seen and heard by many, and by her father among others, at a place called *Pont y Madog*, which was a pit by the side of the lane leading to *Langharn* filled with water, and not quite dry in the summer. However she seemed not to be afraid ; therefore went to *Langharn*. On coming back before night (though it was rather dark) she passed by the place, but not without thinking of the ap-

parition. But being a little beyond this pit, in a field where there was a little rill of water, and just going to pass it, having one foot stretched over it, and looking before her, she saw something like a great dog (one of the Dogs of Hell) coming towards her. Being within four or five yards of her, it stopped, sat down, and set up such a scream, so horrible, so loud, and so strong, that she thought the earth moved under her; with which she fainted and fell down. She did not awake and go to the next house, which was but the length of one field from the place, until about midnight, having one foot wet in the rill of water which she was going to pass when she saw the apparition.

One time, as Thomas Miles Harry was coming home by night from a journey, when near *Tyn y Llwyn*, he saw the resemblance of fire, the west side of the river, on his left hand; and looking towards the mountain near the rock *Tarren y Trwyn* on his left hand, all on a sudden, saw the fire near him on one side, and the appearance of a mastiff dog on the other side, at which he was exceedingly terrified. The appearance of a mastiff dog was a most dreadful sight. He called at *Tyn y Llwyn*, requesting the favour of a person to accompany him home. The man of the house being acquainted with him sent two of his servants with him home.

W. J. was once a Sabbath-breaker at *Risca* village, where he frequently used to play, and visit the ale-houses on the Sabbath day, and there stay till late at night. On returning homeward he heard something walking behind him, and turning to see what it was, he could see the likeness of a man walking by his side ; he could not see his face, and was afraid to look much at it, fearing it was an evil spirit, as it really was : therefore he did not wish it good night. This dreadful, dangerous apparition generally walked by the left side of him. It afterwards appeared like a great mastiff dog, which terrified him so much that he knew not where he was. After it had gone about half a mile, it transformed itself into a great fire, as large as a small field, and resembled the noise which a fire makes in burning gorse.

## THE CORPSE-CANDLE \*.

(From "*A Relation of Apparitions,*" &c. by the  
Rev. Edmund Jones.)

ABOUT the latter end of the sixteenth century, and the beginning of the seventeenth, there lived in the valley of *Ebwy Fawr*, one Walter John

\* Called in Welsh *Canwyll gorf*, or *Canwyllau Cyrph*. The corpse-candle denotes the death of the person who is seen carrying it, and varies in the strength of the light according to the sex of the victim; the female *Canwyll gorf* being a pale and delicate blue light. It is seen all over Wales. Mr. Roberts however says, in his *Cambrian Popular Antiquities*, that "the superstitious notion concerning the corpse-candle is at present almost confined to the diocese of St. David's, where it is the popular belief, that a short time before the death of a person, a light is seen issuing from the sick-bed, and taking its course to the church-yard along the very track which the funeral is afterwards to pursue." Both the corpse-candle, and *Aderin y corff*, the corpse-bird (screech owl), may be naturally accounted for; but it is only the business of the compiler to record and illustrate the superstitious belief in them. There is an appearance in Wales called a *Llatrith*, which is similar to the Scotch *Wraith*, and the Irish *Fetch*; that is, a resemblance of any particular person. But in Wales, this does not always denote the death

Harry, belonging to the people called Quakers, a harmless, honest man, and by occupation a farrier, who went to live at *Ty yn y Fid*, in that valley, where one Morgan Lewis, a weaver, had lived before him ; and after his death had appeared to some, and troubled the house. One night, Walter being in bed with his wife, and awake, saw a light come up stairs, and expecting to see the spectre, and being somewhat afraid, though he was naturally a very fearless man, strove to awake his wife by pinching her, but could not awake her ; and seeing the spectre coming with a candle in his hand, and a white woollen cap upon his head, and the dress he always wore, resolved to speak to him, and did, when he came near the bed, and said, " Morgan Lewis, why dost thou walk this earth?" To which the apparition gravely answered, like one in some distress, " that it was because of some 'bottoms of wool which he had hid in the wall of the house, which he desired him to take away, and then he would trouble them no more." And then Walter said, " I charge thee, Morgan Lewis, in the name of God, that thou trouble my

of the person so seen, as there are many now alive, whose Llatrith has been seen by several in the Vale of Neath, when they were at a great distance from thence, and who are still alive, and in ignorance of the circumstance. This sort of vision never speaks, and vanishes when spoken to.

house no more ;" at which he vanished away, and appeared no more.

A clergyman's son in this county (Monmouth), but now a clergyman himself in England, who, in his younger days, was somewhat vicious, having been at a debauch one night, and coming home late, when the doors were locked and the people in bed, feared to disturb them ; fearing also their chiding and expostulations about his staying so late, went to the servant, who slept in an out-room, as is often the manner in this country. He could not awake the servant, but while he stood over him, he saw a small light come out of the servant's nostrils, which soon became a corpse-candle. He followed it out, until it came to a foot-bridge, which lay over a rivulet of water. It came into the gentleman's head to raise up the end of the foot-bridge from off the bank whereon it lay, to see what it would do. When it came, it seemed to offer to go over, but did not go, as if loth to go because the bridge was displaced. When he saw that, he put the bridge in its place, and stayed to see what the candle would do. It came on the bridge when it was replaced ; but when it came near him, it struck him, as it were with a handkerchief ; but the effect was strong, for he became dead upon the place, not knowing of him-



self a long time before he revived. Such is the power of the spirits of the other world, and it is ill jesting with them. A Sadducee\*, and a proud ridiculer of apparitions, in this gentleman's place, now, would have a pure seasoning for his pastime. It is true these gentlemen have not seen the *corpse-candles* of Wales; but they should believe the numerous and ever-continuing witnesses of it, and not foolishly discredit abundant matters of fact, attested by honest, wise men. We have heard of others, who, from an excess of natural courage, or being in liquor, have endeavoured to stop the *corpse-candles*, and have been struck down upon the place, but now none offer it, being deterred by a few former examples related, remembered, and justly believed.

Joshua Coslet, a man of sense and knowledge, told me of several *corpse-candles* he had seen, but one in particular, which he saw in a lane called *Hool bwlech y gwynt* (Wind-gap lane) in Landeilo Fawr parish, where he suddenly met a *corpse-candle*, of a small light when near him, but in-

\* By this name Mr. Jones has been pleased uniformly to designate all persons incredulous in the appearance of fairies, Cwn Annwn, (Hell-hounds), and corpse candles. After the perusal of so many detailed accounts, reader! art thou a Sadducee?

creasing as it went farther from him. He could easily perceive that there was some dark shadow passing along with the candle, but he was afraid to look earnestly upon it. Not long after a burying passed that way. He told me, that it is the common opinion, doubtless from some experience of it, that, if a man should wantonly strike it, he should be struck down by it; but if one touches it unawares, he shall pass on unhurt. He also said, that some dark shadow of a man carried the candle, holding it between his three fore-fingers over against his face. This is what some have seen, who had the courage to look earnestly. Others have seen the likeness of a candle carried in a skull. There is nothing unreasonable or unlikely in either of these representations.

One William John, of the parish of Lanboydi, a smith, on going home one night, being somewhat drunk and bold (it seems too bold), saw one of the *corpse-candles*. He went out of his way to meet it, and when he came near it, he saw it was a burying, and the corpse upon the bier, the perfect resemblance of a woman in the neighbourhood, whom he knew, holding the candle between her fore-fingers, who dreadfully grinned at him; and presently he was struck down from his

horse, where he remained awhile, and was ill a long time after, before he recovered. This was before the real burying of the woman: his fault, and therefore his danger, was his coming presumptuously against the candle. This is another sensible proof of the apparition and being of spirits.

The fore-knowledge of those *corpse-candle* spirits, concerning deaths and burials, is wonderful, as the following instance will show. One Rees Thomas, a carpenter, passing through a place called *Rhiw Edwst*, near *Cappel Ewen*, by night, heard a stir coming towards him, walking and speaking; and when they were come to him, he felt as if some person put their hand upon his shoulder, and saying to him "*Rhy's bach pa fodd yr y'ch chwi?*" (Dear Rees, how are you?) which surprised him much, for he saw nothing. But a month after, passing that way, he met a burying in that very place, and a woman who was in the company put her hand upon him, and spoke exactly the same words to him that the invisible spirit had spoken to him before; at which he could no less than wonder. This I had from the mouth of Mr. T. I., of Trevach, a godly minister of the gospel.

The following account I had from under the hand of Mr. Morris Griffith, a man truly religious, and a lively preacher of the gospel among the Baptists, which came to pass in Pembrokeshire, as follows. “ When I kept school at *Pont Faen* parish, in Pembrokeshire, as I was coming from a place called *Tredavith*, and was come to the top of the hill, I saw a great light down in the valley ; which I wondered at, for I could not imagine what it meant. But it came to my mind that it was a light before a burying, though I never could believe before that there was such a thing. The light which I saw there was a very red light, and it stood still for about a quarter of an hour, in the way which went towards *Lanferch-llawddog* church. I made haste to the other side of the hill, that I might see it farther, and from thence I saw it go along to the church-yard, where it stood still for a little time, and entered into the church. I stood still, waiting to see it come out, and it was not long before it came out, and went to a certain part of the church-yard, where it stood a little time, and then vanished out of my sight. A few days afterwards, being in school with the children, about noon, I heard a great noise over head, as if the top of the house was coming down. I went to see the garret, and there was nothing amiss. A few days afterward,

Mr. Higgon of *Pont Faen's* son died. When the carpenter came to fetch the boards to make the coffin, which were in the garret, he made exactly such a stir in handling the boards in the garret as was made before by some spirit, who foreknew the death that was to come to pass. In carrying the body to the grave, the burying stood where the light stood for about a quarter of an hour, because there was some water cross the way, and the people could not go over it without wetting their feet; therefore they were obliged to wait till those that had boots helped them over. The child was buried in that very spot of ground in the church-yard where I saw the light stop after it came out of the church. 'This is what I can boldly testify, having seen and heard what I relate; a thing which before I could not believe.

MORRIS GRIFFITH."

Some have been so hardy as to lie down by the way-side where the corpse-candle passed, that they may see what passed; for they were not hurted who did not stand in the way. Some have seen the resemblance of a skull carrying the candle; others the shape of the person that is to die carrying the candle between its forefingers, holding the light before its face. Some have said that they saw the shape of those who were to be at

the burying. I am willing to suspend my belief of this, as seeming to be extravagant, though their foreboding knowledge of mortality appears to be very wonderful and undeniable.

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STORY OF POLLY SHONE RHYS SHONE.

*From the oral relation of David Shone.*

"I LIVED as a servant in a farm-house in *Ystrad-fellta*, where a young woman, named Polly Shone Rhys Shone, was in the habit of coming to sew. She was employed in the neighbourhood as a sempstress. Well, it happened that I was coming home one night with William Watkin, a fellow-servant, and we perceived a light coming to meet us, which we soon discovered to be a corpse-candle. I cautioned my companion not to stand in its way (knowing the danger of such temerity), but, said I, 'follow my instructions; station yourself here with me;' and we placed ourselves upon a bridge over a brook, through which the road passed, and we lay down and turned our faces towards the water, and there we clearly saw the reflection of

Polly Shone Rhys Shone, bearing the corpse-candle upon the ring-finger of her right hand, and the other hand over the light, as if to protect it from the wind. We remained motionless in this position until the reflection vanished, and then we walked home sad and sorrowful; although we could not believe that it was Polly; for what should she do in that church-yard? that was not her burying-place\*. But, however, sad thoughts we had, although we said nothing on our return, though repeatedly questioned why we looked so mournful. In a week after we heard that poor Polly had been suddenly taken off, and her corpse passed that very road, to be buried in that same church-yard."

\* The Welsh, like the Irish, are singularly attached to the burial-place of their family, and adhere to the spot, where their forefathers were laid with an extraordinary tenacity. A labourer will request to be carried to the grave of his ancestors, though his death-bed may be fifty miles distant. Every Easter, Whitsuntide, and Christmas the relatives of the departed are busy white-washing the head and foot-stones, and planting flowers on the graves: they also listen at the church-door in the dark, when they sometimes fancy they hear the names called over in church of those who are destined shortly to join their lost relatives in the tomb.

## THE KYHIRRAETH.

(From "*A Relation of Apparitions*," &c. by the  
Rev. Edmund Jones.)

"I AM now," says the reverend author, "going to give you an account of the *Kyhirraeth*, a doleful foreboding noise before death.

"D. P., of Lan y byther parish, a sober, sensible man, and careful to tell the truth, informed me, that, in the beginning of the night, his wife and maid-servant being in the house together, which was by the way-side, they heard the doleful voice of the *Kyhirraeth*; and when it came over-against the window, it pronounced these strange words, of no signification that we know of, *woolach*, *woolach*; and some time after a burying passed that way. I confess a word of this sound, especially the latter part of this last syllable, sounding in Welsh like the twenty-third letter of the Greek alphabet, at least as they pronounced it formerly in the schools, pronounced by a spirit of the night, near at hand, with a disagreeable, horrid-sounding voice, was very terrible and impressive upon the mind and memory. The judicious Joshua



Coalet, who lived on that side of the river Towy, which runs through the middle of Caermarthen-shire, where the Kyhirraeth is often heard, gave me the following remarkable account of it.

“That it is a doleful, disagreeable sound, heard before the deaths of many, and most apt to be heard before foul weather. The voice resembles the groaning of sick persons who are to die, heard at first at a distance, then comes nearer, and the last near at hand ; so that it is a threefold warning of death, the king of terrors. It begins strong, and louder than a sick man can make ; the second cry is lower, but not less doleful, but rather more so ; the third yet lower, and soft, like the groaning of a sick man almost spent and dying ; so that a person well remembering the voice, and coming to the sick man’s bed who is to die, shall hear his groans exactly alike ; which is an amazing evidence of the spirit’s foreknowledge.

“ Sometimes when it cries very loud it bears a resemblance of one crying who is troubled with a stitch. If it meets any hindrance in the way, it seems to groan louder. It is, or hath been, very common in the three commots of *Ynis-Cenis*. A commot is a portion of ground less than a canttref, or a hundred : for three commots make up the hundred of *Ynis-Cenis*, which extends from the sea as far as *Landilo Fawr*, containing twelve

parishes, viz. *Llandillo Fawr, Bettws, Llanedi, Llan-non, Cydweli, Langenick, Penfre, Lanarthney, Llangydeirh, &c.*, which lie on the south-east side of the river *Towy*, where sometime past it cried and groaned before the death of every person, as my informant thought, who lived that side of the county. It sounded before the death of persons who were born in these parishes, and died elsewhere. Sometimes the voice is heard long before death; yet three quarters of a year is the longest time beforehand. But it must be a common thing indeed, as it came to be a common thing for people to say, by way of reproach to a person making a disagreeable noise, *Oh'r Kyhirraeth*; and sometimes to children crying and groaning unreasonable.

"Walter Watkins, of Neuath, in the parish of Landdettŷ, in the county of Brecon, being at school at Caermarthen, and as he and some other scholars who lodged in the same house with him were playing ball by the house late in the evening, heard the dismal, mournful noise of the *Kyhirraeth* very near them, but could see nothing, which was very shocking to hear. Though these sort of men are incredulous enough, yet they were soon persuaded that it was the voice of neither man nor beast, but of some spirit; which made them leave

their play and run into the house. Not long after, a man who lived near the house died. This kind of noise is always heard before some person's death.

“ The woman of the house where these scholars lodged related to them many such accounts, which they heard with contempt and ridicule, believing nothing of what she said. One morning they asked her sportingly what she had heard or seen of a spirit that night? She readily answered, that she heard a spirit come to the door, and passing by her while she sat by the fire, it seemed to walk into a room where a sick man was; and after some time she heard it coming back, and as if it fell down in a faint, and was raised up again. Soon after, the sick man rose up, thinking he was able to walk, came into the room where the woman heard the fall, and fell down dead in that very part of the room where the spirit made the same kind of stir which his fall made, and was made by those that raised him up.

“ In *Montgomeryshire*. Edward Lloyd, in the parish of Langyrig, being very ill, those that were with him heard the voice of some person very near them; they looked about the house, but could see no person: the voice seemed to be in the room where they were. Soon after, they heard these

words, by something unseen, *Y mae Nembren y Ty yn craccio* (The uppermost beam of the house cracketh) ; soon after, *Fe dorr yn y man* (It will presently break) ; then they heard the same voice say, *Dyna fy yn torri* (There, it breaks !) He died that moment, which much affected the company.

“ A woman in *Caermarthen* town protested to Mr. Charles Winter, of the parish of *Bedwellty* (who was then at the academy, and since became a preacher of the gospel), that she heard like the sound of a company, as it were a burying, coming up from a river ; and presently, as it were, the sound of a cart, coming another way to meet the company ; and the cart seemed to stop while the company went by, and then went on. Soon after a dead corpse was brought from the river from one of the vessels, and a cart met the burying, and stopped till the company went by, exactly as the woman heard. Mr. W. was no man to tell an untruth ; and the woman had no self-interest to serve by telling an untruth. The wonder is, how these spirits can so particularly foreshow things to come. Either their knowledge of future things near at hand must be very great, or they must have a great influence to accomplish things as foreshown. Be it either way, the thing is wonderful, of the very minute and particular knowledge of these spirits in the manner of deaths and burials.”

(From Roberts's *Cambrian Popular Antiquities*.)

“In South Wales another appearance is generally affirmed to take place before the death of some noted person, viz. a coffin and burial train are seen to go from the neighbourhood of the house in the dead of night towards the church-yard. Sometimes a hearse and mourning coaches form the cavalcade, and move in gloomy silence in such a direction : not a footstep is heard as they proceed along the public roads, and even through the towns; and the terrors of the few who happen to see them are spread over the whole neighbourhood. Of these appearances the causes are probably artificial; and Lear's idea of *shoeing a troop of horse with felt* may be in these instances more than imaginary.”



## ADDITIONAL NOTES

ON

THE IRISH LEGENDS IN THE FIRST VOLUME.

BY THE BROTHERS GRIMM.

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### *The Legend of Knocksheogowna.*

THIS legend resembles the German one of the boy who does not know what terror is, and whom no apparitions can frighten, less in the fable than in the character. Vide Hausmärchen, No. 4, and the notes on it.

### *The Legend of Knockgraston*

Belongs to that class of tales in which it is represented that the spirits give good fortune only to the good, and that the same favour, when asked by the wicked, turns out to his detriment. See the notes to the third volume of Hausmärchen, p. 155.

### *The Young Piper.*

The little bagpiper is *Hans mein Igel* of the German Tales (p. 108), who likewise asks his father for a bagpipe, on which he plays with much skill. There is a still more striking coincidence with German stories of changelings (vide our Col-

lection, i. Nos. 81 and 82), who, when they come near the water, or on a bridge, jump in, and play as merrily as in their own element; while at the same moment the true child is found strong and healthy by its mother in the cradle.

One of the oldest legends of the changeling is that in the Low German poem of Zeno (*Bruns Sammlung*, p. 26). The devil carries off the unbaptised child, and places himself in its cradle; but is so greedy in his demands on the mother's milk that she cannot satisfy him. Nurses are hired; but as they, too, are unable to appease the insatiable changeling, cows are brought for his nourishment. The parents are obliged to expend their whole fortune in feeding the false child.

What the poets, in a Christian point of view, ascribe to the devil, the people in their songs and tales attribute to fairies and dwarfs. The North abounds in stories of such changes (*um-skiptingar*), to which new-born, unbaptised children are exposed. See the Collection of Faroe Songs, p. 294.

#### *The Brewery of Egg-shells.*

A German tradition (*Tales*, iii. 39.), which is obviously the same, is superior to it in the pretty trait, that the mother recovers her own child as soon as she succeeds in making the changeling laugh. The mother breaks an egg, and in the two shells puts water on the fire to boil; upon this the changeling cries out, "I am as old as the Westerwald, and never yet saw any one boil water in an egg-shell!" bursts out into a laugh; and the same moment the real child is restored. It is also related in Denmark. Vide Thiele, i. 47.

#### *The Legend of Bottle Hill.*

The German tale of "*Table Cover-thyself*" (*Hausmärchen*, No. 36.) agrees with this in the main; and in the note on it the corresponding Italian story is also quoted.

*Fairies, or no Fairies.*

People who believe in fairies will account for the apparition, by supposing that the spirits which would not show themselves to the young people had transformed themselves into mash-rooms, beneath which they are very fond of reposing; and it is not the object of the tale to turn the belief in them into ridicule. Hence the title, in the original, *Fairies or no Fairies*; for which we have substituted another.

*The Haunted Cellar.*

In German Traditions, i. 93, a farmer, quite tired of the kobold, determines to burn down the barn in which he has taken up his abode. He first removes from it all the straw, and on taking out the last load, after having closed it carefully, he sets fire to it himself. When it is all in flames, happening to turn round, he sees the kobold, who is sitting on the cart, and who calls out to him, "It was high time for us to come out."

*Master and Man.*

Sir Walter Scott, in the second volume of *Border Minstrelsy*, p. 177, relates the same story, with the remark, that it occurred in the sixteenth century; that the man, while walking in the field, was suddenly carried off, hearing the noise of a whirlwind, and these words: (*Horse and Hattock*).

There is a similar tradition related in a letter written on the 15th of March, 1695, and printed in *Aubrey's Miscellanies*, p. 158; and which is likewise communicated by Sir Walter Scott, p. 178, 179.

Some schoolboys at Forres were spinning their tops in the church-yard, when, though the air was calm, they heard the noise of a wind, and saw a light dust arise in an eddy, at some distance. It came nearer, and the boys crossed themselves;



but one of them, more undaunted than the rest, cried out, "Horse and Hattock with my top!" The top was instantly lifted up and carried off, but whither they could not tell, on account of a cloud of dust; but they afterwards found it in the church-yard, on the other side of the church.

*The Spirit Horse.*

In Scotland, the light which entices the wanderer from the road into marshes and precipices is called Spunkie.—See Stewart, 161; 162.

*Daniel O'Rourke.*

The man in the moon is a popular superstition, which perhaps even now is spread over the whole of Europe; but which prevailed in the middle ages, and is probably founded on still more ancient heathen notions. In the spots on the moon's disk, the vulgar recognize the figure of a man with a bundle of thorns on his back, and an axe in his hand. Among the people in Germany, he is the man who hewed wood on a Sunday; and, as a punishment for the profanation of the Sabbath, is doomed to freeze in the cold moon.—See Hebel's song in the Alemannic poems. It seems to have a reference to a passage in the Bible (Numbers xv. 32, 36.) The Italians of the thirteenth century imagined the man in the moon to be Cain, who is going to sacrifice to God thorns; the most wretched productions of the ground.—(See Dante, *Inferno*, xx. 124; *Paradiso*, ii. 50. (*Caino e li Spine*), and the commentators.) A rather difficult old English song of the fourteenth century is among Ritson's ancient songs, London, 1790, p. 35, 37. The man in the moon is represented cold and fatigued, with a pitchfork and thorns, which have torn his dress. He formerly dwelt on earth, cut wood where he had no right, and the bailiff seized his coat. Shakspeare's

allusions are more familiar (Midsummer Night's Dream and Tempest, ii. 2.) An English nursery tale says :—

“ The man in the moon  
Came down too soon,  
To ask his way to Norwich.”

*The Crookened Back.*

Similar games in Germany. V. Hausmarchen, ii. xxiii.

For similar customs on May-day, and the beginning of Spring, disseminated throughout Europe, see Hausmärchen, Introduction to second volume, p. 30.

The pernicious breath of the fairies is called *alv-gust* (see Hallagax under this word). In Norway and in Iceland, a certain kind of boil is called *álfa brunt*.

*Fior Usga.*

Waldron has a legend of the Isle of Man, according to which a diver came to a town under the sea, the magnificence of which he cannot sufficiently extol, and where the floors of the rooms are composed of precious stones.

There are also in Germany and other countries traditions enough of lakes, which occupy the sites of former cities and castles; see German Tales, No. 131.

*The Legend of Lough Gur.*

This tale is connected with the Scotch and Irish legends of the Elf-bull, respecting which see our Essay.

*The Enchanted Lake.*

However different in external form, this tale is, in fact, very nearly coincident with the German one of Dame Holle (Hausmärchen, 24). It is a singular circumstance, that the

woman under the lake has large teeth, like Dame Holle, beneath the water. It is also remarkable, that as they say in Hesse when it snows, "Dame Holle is making her bed, the feathers are flying;" the Irish children cry, with a similar notion, "The Scotchmen are plucking their geese."



THE END.

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